

**Themes of Exile in the Poetry and Prose of Ezra Pound in
*The New Age***

Samuel J. Simmons

Doctor of Philosophy

English Literature

University of Edinburgh

2008

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	6
Themes of Exile, Personal and Economic, in <i>The New Age</i>	
2. Chapter 2.....	29
From Alienation to Exile: Pound's Personal Journey in <i>The New Age</i>	
3. Chapter 3.....	64
The Economics of Exile: Part One	
4. Chapter 4.....	95
The Economics of Exile: Part Two	
5. Chapter 5.....	127
Translating Themes of Exile in <i>The New Age</i> : 'The Seafarer'	
6. Chapter 6.....	162
Translating Themes of Exile in <i>The New Age</i> : 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'	
7. Conclusions.....	198
<i>The New Age</i> Enforcing Pound's Exile	
8. Works Cited.....	206

The current study offers an analysis of the American poet Ezra Pound and his years in London between 1908 and 1921, specifically those years when he contributed to A.R. Orage's *The New Age*. Despite the volume of critical work on Pound, and despite the wealth of his writings in *The New Age*, this body of work has not previously received the attention of a full-length study.

Chapter One of this thesis sets the stage for Pound's emergence as critic of cultural modernity by exploring a key theme that resonates throughout his contributions to *The New Age*: the idea of the modern artist as exile. This chapter also examines the importance of the idea of translation to his thought during this period and presents a broader analysis of the economic and literary importance of *The New Age* to his intellectual and aesthetic development. Chapter Two broadens this analysis by examining the themes of personal exile and psychological isolation in Pound's historical background and the effect these themes had upon his writing for *The New Age*. Chapters Three and Four examine two key ideas that animate his work for *The New Age*: his analysis of the importance of patronage to cultural value and aesthetic production and his developing interest in economics, C.H. Douglas' Economic Democracy and its doctrine of Social Credit. Chapters Five and Six explore Pound's literary relationship to *The New Age* in order to discuss how this nexus of ideas inflect two of his early masterpieces, 'The Seafarer'(1911) and 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'(1919). Chapter Seven concludes by summarising Pound's position at the end of the 1920s and considering the overall importance of his writing for *The New Age* to his social critique of modernity, his emerging economic radicalism and his later political ideas.

I acknowledge that, in building on and incorporating the work of others, good scholarship demands that such use must be appropriately acknowledged. Whenever the thoughts, words, books, articles, web resources or any creative works of others are used, either by direct quotation, by paraphrasing or by the use of another's ideas, the author and the source has been clearly identified through the use of proper referencing. Any failure to do so is thus by oversight, for which no one bears the responsibility but the present author.

I hereby declare that this work is my own.

Acknowledgements

I wish thank the English Department at the University of Edinburgh for supporting my candidacy for Doctor of Philosophy. In particular, I thank Dr. Cairns Craig for inviting me to the University of Edinburgh in 2002, Dr. Andrew Taylor for reading this work at various stages and offering valuable direction, and Dr. Lee Spinks who has helped me see it to completion, and to whom I issue gratitude and apologies, both of which have been justified over our 5 years working together. Further, I thank the College of Literatures, Languages and Cultures for its financial support that facilitated my ability to present two papers at important Ezra Pound conferences in America and Italy 2004 and 2006 and to Kate Marshall for her administrative support through my trials of bureaucracy.

I would like to acknowledge my figurative debt to my incredible parents, without whom, I literally would not be here.

Finally, I would like to extend thanks to Dr. Stephen Brown at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario for believing that I could do this and to my infinitely loving kjærsten for making sure I did.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Ezra Pound: Themes of Personal and Economic Exile in *The New Age*

In the years before, during and after World War I, Ezra Pound wrote over 260 pieces in the journal, *The New Age*. With considerable literary freedom, Pound used this unique format, unfettered, to explore his view as an exile. This dissertation deals with the writings of Pound, specifically his themes of personal and economic alienation as presented through the pages of the publication, *The New Age*. Despite the volume of critical work on Pound and despite the wealth of his writings in *The New Age*, this body of work has not previously received the attention of a full-length study.

While there is a rich and varied body of critical works focused on the life and writings of Ezra Pound available to be used by the contemporary reader and critic, few have dealt at length with the poet's contributions to *The New Age*. Biographies from Charles Norman's Ezra Pound (1960) and Noel Stock's The Life of Ezra Pound (1970) to J.J. Wilhelm's Ezra Pound in London and Paris 1908-1925 (1990), Humphrey Carpenter's A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound (1988), and the recent biography from A. David Moody, Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work, Volume I (2007) all include discussions of the historical facts of Pound's involvement with the journal but none spend much, if any, time on the writings themselves and the relationship to the wider ideas of Pound's critical mission. Much of the early critical work, especially that of Hugh Kenner (1951's The Poetry of Ezra Pound and 1971's The Pound Era), Donald Davie (1964's Ezra Pound: Poet as Sculptor and 1976's Ezra Pound), and Daniel Pearlman's The Barb

of Time: On the Unity of Ezra Pound's *Cantos* (1969), established clear arguments for the lasting relevance of Ezra Pound. These works liberated the subsequent studies of Robert Casillo, Tim Redman, Leon Surette, and Peter Nicholls¹ from that burden and thus allowed an exploration of the poetry and criticism within the necessary contexts of Pound's political and economic pronouncements without the need to make a case for the centrality of Pound in Modernism in English poetry.

From beyond the field of criticism specifically dealing with Pound there is Wallace Martin's *'The New Age' Under Orage* (1967) that offers great insight into the nature of journal, Orage's editorial ideology, and Pound's relationship to both. Although all of the above studies deal with Pound and *The New Age* in one way or another, his contributions to the journal have never received the treatment of a full-length study. Today, Brown University's Modernist Journals Project, a digital archive that provides the full text of the journal in the years under A.R. Orage's editorship, has made this more readily possible for the first time.

As Ian F.K. Bell's *Critic and Scientist: The Modernist Poetics of Ezra Pound* (1981) examined Ezra Pound through the theme of science in order to "extend the contexts in which discussions of his poetics have tended to reside"², the current study finds similar aims and intends to refocus the readings of Pound's contributions to *The New Age* and re-shift the perspectives from which these writings are currently seen in the existing body of critical works surrounding Ezra Pound. By considering the pieces within the contexts in which they were written this paper will explore the thematic self-positioning as exile in the prose Pound contributed to *The New Age* as

¹ The texts cited here include Peter Nicholl's *Ezra Pound: Politics, Economics and Writing* (1984), Robert Casillo's *The Genealogy of Demons: Anti-Semitism, Fascism, and the Myths of Ezra Pound* (1988), Tim Redman's *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (1991), and Leon Surette's *A Light from Eleusis: A Study of Ezra Pound's Cantos* (1979) and *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (1999)

² Ian F. A. Bell, *Critic as Scientist: The Modernist Poetics of Ezra Pound* (London: Methuen & Co., 1981) 3

well as the poetry, specifically the translations of “The Seafarer” and “Homage to Sextus Propertius.”

The past century lies neither kindly nor comfortably on the legacy of Ezra Pound. Born in America in 1885, he moved to London in 1908, then on to Paris in 1921 and to Italy in 1924 where he remained during World War II and wrote the political words, via anti-American radio broadcasts, which would become his heinous historical epitaph. Pound was branded a traitor after capture in 1945, then found insane and incarcerated in an American asylum for thirteen years. His early literary accomplishments and ambitions were overcast by the reality of his treacherous public rants and the reprehensible ideologies critics have observed in his life-long epic, The Cantos.

Originally founded in 1894 as a periodical of the Christian Socialist movement, *The New Age* was resurrected in 1908 by editor A.R. Orage as an exciting, risk-taking periodical of dissident Fabian Socialists. At the same time, Pound announced his arrival in London with his first collection of poetry, A Lume Spento. At the invitation of Orage, Pound was enlisted as a contributor to *The New Age* and offered considerable latitude in the scope of his criticism. Presenting thoughts that went beyond the constraints of literary critique, Pound the poet became Pound the social critic.

In the development of Ezra Pound’s cultural critique, *The New Age* provides a unique source of study with its complex matrix of varied examinations of human civilization. Featuring articles by Holbrook Jackson, G.K. Chesterton, H.G Wells, Hillaire Belloc, T.E Hulme, C.H. Douglas and George Bernard Shaw, the journal was a nexus of cultural and political debate. In the prose and the poetry Pound published in this venue can be read the convergence of elements of his cultural perspective with his aesthetic vision.

Reading Pound in *The New Age* exposes an overwhelming sense of alienation, both personal and economic. By dealing with themes of exile, economics, and translation as they appear in *The New Age*, this dissertation argues that while Pound grew increasingly frustrated with his aesthetic vision it became, by necessity, infused with the social and cultural critiques that he had been simultaneously professing in his prose. His attempts to build an artistic groundwork that would facilitate the realisation of a cultural renaissance, an American Risorgimento, from his position of exile in London amounted to very little. This lack of impact left Pound bitterly disappointed, and increased his sense of alienation. The failure of his dream of a Risorgimento led him to examine new root causes of social malaise and to new forms of poetry fit to address this total vision. This dissertation traces that development in his prose and poetry published in *The New Age* with considerations made for biographical and textual illumination.

His prose in *The New Age* begins with a seemingly shapeless Poundian series on literature and aesthetics called "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"(1911-12). However, the worlds of literary and social commentary are immediately fused for Pound in his subsequent contributions for the journal in his "Patria Mia"(1912), "Through Alien Eyes"(1913) and "America: Chances and Remedies"(1913) which examined the cultural possibility of a renaissance in America. "The Approach to Paris"(1913), "Allen Upward Serious"(1914), and "Affirmations"(1914) all constitute ostensibly literary commentary but the social implications are constantly present: "We need the old feud between the artist and the smuggler portions of the community revived with some virulence for the welfare of things at large."³

His next string of articles in *The New Age*, "American Chaos"(1915), "This Super-Neutrality"(1915), "Provincialism the Enemy"(1917) and "Studies in

³ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *The New Age* XI.23 (October 3, 1912) 540a

Contemporary Mentality” (1917-8), reverse the relationship of art and society in his work, constituting what is clearly social and political commentary but infusing it with literary concerns:

If self-interest is to clothe itself in a beautiful symbolism it must *clothe* itself sufficiently. There are contacts in commerce, personal contacts, and contacts through literature and the arts [...] The impression of national character or national honesty is a *literary* impression.⁴

His translations at either end of the decade, those of ‘The Seafarer’(1911) and ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’(1919) can both be read as having a personal resonance for Pound as well as social and political relevance while propagating the aestheticism to which Pound had adhered throughout the decade. These poems are in the tradition of his efforts to communicate the vital relationship between man and nature as he had in A Lume Spento (1909). Over the next ten years, the tradition in his poetry became a critique of the relationship of man to man, in other words ‘society’ or ‘civilisation’, through the masks of historical figures and poets of Canzoni and Cathay. ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ should be read as Pound’s commentary on his poetic realisation, by effect if not by intent, that his aesthetic program had to be a political and cultural one as well, embodying the new considerations of modern artistic consumption, the plutocracy, politics, economics, and war.

The rest of this chapter will attempt to set the stage for Pound’s development in the 1910s preparing for examinations of his theme of exile, both personal and economic, and his use(s) of translation while also offering a contextualization of these pieces by explaining the nature of that context, *The New Age*.

Chapter Two explores the theme of personal exile and psychological isolation in Pound’s writing in *The New Age*. An argument is presented that Pound’s general dissatisfaction that existed before his examination of world civilizations may

⁴ Ezra Pound “American Chaos II” *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471b

have stemmed from a highly personalised and subjective interpretation of the world, a world that he not only felt had exiled him, but from which he worked to exile himself. For Ezra Pound, the *feeling* of exclusion never left, but informed many of his positions on art, America, and the world. Pound's exile, real and imagined, was central to his self-definition and expressions as an artist and critic.

Chapter Three examines the themes of professional exile and economic isolation in Pound's cultural critiques in *The New Age*. From its manifestations in patronage and publishing, it is argued that Pound saw the arts as only safe when isolated from the demands of public taste and the machinery of publication. His hostility towards the institutions of higher education, printing and publishing, and the 'provincial' public appear in much of his prose in *The New Age*. So too does his critique of the commodification of culture and his encouragement of patronage. Pound was convinced that it was society's duty to provide a place where the artist could live and work free from the economic and financial constraints of modernity. All of these concerns, concerns that were central to Pound's cultural critique, appear before his reading of Economic Democracy by economist and contributor to *The New Age*, C.H. Douglas.

Chapter Four continues the examination of the themes of economic isolation by analyzing the influence of C.H. Douglas and Economic Democracy in Pound's publications in *The New Age*. The appearance of Douglas affected the trajectory of Pound's development as a social critic in the 1920s and 1930s. But it is argued that Pound's exposure to Douglas offered justification for Pound's beliefs in the intricate relationship between the social and the aesthetic while adding an important, if ironic, resonance to his ideas of intellectual commerce and the exchange value of language. The influence of Douglas added weight to Pound's sociological observations of

tyranny and artistic isolation while forcing him to reconsider the direction of his major epic, The Cantos.

Chapter Five traces Pound's reconstitution of his literary and aesthetic concerns in *The New Age* as investigations into the institutions that constitute literature as a field of cultural production up to and including the time when economic concerns formally appear in his field of vision. Pound's capacity to see how the constraints of modernity need not necessarily suppress the arts into irrelevance or inaccuracy by mass publication, but rather have a vital role in society, are concerns of his poetry that appear in *The New Age*. Pound's translation of the Anglo-Saxon 'The Seafarer' concludes that the speaker must fare forth irrespective of the material needs of the individual or the considerations of this "life on loan and on land" in pursuit of his craft or creation of beauty.

Chapter Six examines Pound's later translation of 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' as it appeared in *The New Age*. It is argued that in Pound's hands, the 'Homage' lacks the profound irony that many critics have perceived in his 'wit' of translation. However, 'Homage' contains the greater ironic power of Propertius refusing to abandon his love lyrics for the epic forms of Imperial praise while Pound has very much concluded the opposite. In trying to use the mask to fortify his own conviction the mask became one of profound protest, simultaneously a critique of the monstrous state of society to which he saw the artist forcibly conforming and an acknowledgement of the necessary adaptations Pound himself would have to make to remain relevant.

In Chapter Seven, this discussion moves towards its conclusion by summarising Pound's position at the end of the 1910s while raising questions regarding whether or not the clean editorial slate of Orage and *The New Age* encouraged Pound's social critique, bringing him further away from the poetry that

brought him to London and closer to the areas of economic radicalism and, eventually, fascism.

This study analyses Pound's writings in *The New Age* to show a poet passionately concerned with the role of art in society but tragically incapable of articulating his complicated aesthetic and cultural views in a form of prose or poetry that makes his cultural critique as clear and obvious as he himself believed it to be. This conviction and dissatisfaction lead Pound down the road to the technique and content of The Cantos.

When Ezra Pound moved to London in 1908, he began a long and tumultuous career dedicated to the arts. As an expatriate poet and critic, Pound remained convinced that he was acting in the best interest of America through his life in exile and was critically concerned with the status of art in society.

Pound's early aesthetic was informed by his studies of Romantics at the University of Pennsylvania and Hamilton College. The Middle Ages were a focus of his scholarly specialty from Anglo-Saxon elegy to the lyrics of Tuscany and Provençal. His exploration of English poetry's immediate predecessors, Lionel Johnson, Ernest Rhys, William Butler Yeats, and the anti-Victorian aesthetes of the 1890s, mixed with an engagement with symbolism, 'Celtic' mysticism, classical myth and the "cult of beauty" led Pound to the ideologies of alienation and isolation of the artist. His mission was to find a poetic form that could accurately articulate thought and this pursuit took him into the literatures of the Anglo-Saxon, Provençal, and the medieval world, France, Italy, America, England, China and Japan. The spiritual evocation of sound and image, the rejection of the material, and Pound's 'purging of the flesh' brought him into spiritual contact with the voices of the past, masks or personae he used to compose his early poetry. By 1911, spiritual beauty

was often represented in Pound's poems as a mysterious female, a vision of spiritual and transient beauty. Simple but precise presentation was his craft and his technical method of conveying meaning. These small but meaningful images were to become Pound's trademark principle of structure.

It was also in 1911 that Pound began a long relationship with *The New Age: A Weekly Review of Politics, Literature and Art*, A.R. Orage's London journal that was coloured by the ideologies of Guild Socialism but where differing and opposing viewpoints were expressed, often on juxtaposing pages. It was in the pages of this journal that Pound was able to exercise his political voice and move from aesthete lyricist to politically engaged poet-critic. He wrote extensively on various subjects contributing poems and letters as himself and under pseudonyms B.H. Dias and William Atheling. *The New Age's* strongest appeals to the likes of Pound were Orage's Nietzschean-influenced notion that ideas isolated from life rendered them meaningless unless related to action. Further, Pound absorbed a belief in the artist's central role in society. Orage, and the inheritance of Ruskin, "provided an economic justification for expenditure in the arts."⁵ By 1919, Pound began to see the root of society's inability to afford the arts in 'underconsumption' which launched the notion of social credit and the beginning of Pound's thirty year engagement with radical economics.

Ezra Pound's writing in *The New Age*, from the first letter to the editor in 1910 to the gradual cessation between 1923 and 1926, provides readers with the most spatially and temporally focused body of work that Pound created and yet, as mentioned, it has never received the attention of a full length study. The present study surveys the body of work in *The New Age* and can, at best, serve "as a hint to the inquiring", a beginning of a larger investigation into the particular divisions and

⁵ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 25

subdivisions in the critique of the worlds of art and life in *The New Age*. This is facilitated for future research by Brown University's "Modernist Journals Project" which digitized 15 years of *The New Age*, the years when it was under the editorship of A.R. Orage, making a largely inaccessible archive available to new generations of on-line researchers.

"In the last *New Age* I read that 'geniuses should not be any more ashamed of their warts than of their heads.' Accordingly, I lay my hand upon my wart and agree that warts are trumps.

-E.P.

"A Correction," Letters to the Editor
New Age 28 April 1910, VI.26

It is a well-publicised biographical fact that Ezra Pound arrived in London with only a few pounds to his name. Although he had become slightly more settled financially by the time he met Orage, it must be appreciated that Pound's contributions to *The New Age*, affectionately nicknamed the "No Wage", guaranteed an income. From Pound's humble beginnings in Europe he was constantly struggling for money and Orage's financial, as well as intellectual, support cannot go unappreciated. Pound wrote to his father from Venice in 1908 that he was running out of money. "'I could, I trust, starve like a gentleman. Its (sic) listed as part of the poetic training, you know.'"⁶

Ezra's father, Homer, sent his son money on a monthly basis. Ezra needed the financial support to survive, but he had also found ways to earn an income from varied corners. He offered literary classes to society ladies, earned a small fee for his lectures at the London Polytechnic, and earned nominal sums for his literary work. This money certainly did not seem enough to live on. What Humphrey Carpenter called Pound's 'mysterious' income of £200 has since been credited to Margaret Cravens, a woman Pound met in Paris under somewhat secretive circumstances.

⁶ Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 92

When he was heading to Italy in 1910 he stopped in Paris and spent time with Walter Morse Rummel. As he was courting Olivia Shakespear's daughter, Dorothy, back in London, his other engagements were kept quite quiet. He met Cravens, a 30-year old American studying music and living a wealthy bohemian life in Paris. Their "tragic friendship" ended when she committed suicide two years later(1912), but in the interim, she became his patron and principal source of income. This patronage allowed Pound some liberty in exploring his own development and focusing on writing new poetry without needing to fall victim to the modern scourges of capitalism.

After Cravens' death, *The New Age* would prove to be a significant financial support for Pound. In fact, he was one of the only contributors to have received any payment at all for his work. He wrote 260 articles, poems, and letters for the publication and it was in these years that Pound engaged the key issues of art and life in society while being exposed to the other discourses in *The New Age* and to the inspiration of A.R. Orage. Subsequently, it is in the pages of *The New Age* that we can witness Pound's development from aesthetic medievalist poet to anti-bourgeois radical economist. This change is not an abrupt shift from the poet's private concerns of poetry and the pursuit of beauty to "his final exclusion from the world of letters,"⁷ but rather a gradual and conscious decision to engage the challenges of poetry in the modern age and reinvigorate his work with a public potency. So the ultimate change or shift that is observed in Pound's *New Age* writing takes place foremost in the poem itself, but his prose shows the degrees to which his aesthetic vision had social implications while he was actively sorting out just what those implications were.

It can be generally agreed that Pound's prose style does not explain much, or explain much well. David Hooley addresses this failure as a central reason that, at

⁷ Ezra Pound, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley: 'The Age Demanded'" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 561, ll.59-60

the time of publication (1919), critics of his translation ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ forced him to retract the term ‘translation’ rather than responding with straightforward explanations of what he was doing with Propertius’ *Elegiae*. The irony of purpose in his own prose writing was not lost on him in that he often expressed an awareness that while he was trying to explain how to write clear, concise and accurate prose that his own explication was often anything but clear, concise, or accurate. Consider the humourous and even paradoxical, “Permit me one more cumbersome simile, for I am trying to say something about the masterly use of words, and it is not easy.”⁸ The close study of Pound’s central themes and categories of critique that flow through his pieces in *The New Age* from 1911-20 reveal a degree of consistency in his arguments and a development of ideas, although more often than not the explanation of these changes is absent.

Critics have surmised that Pound’s prose writing was “not prose writing at all, not in the sense of being the articulation of explanations and arguments, but a series of thrusts without any body of knowledge or core to which the reader might refer them.”⁹ While these “thrusts” might be ‘annoying’, as they very well might have been to the readers of *The New Age*, it can be agreed that they are not obstructions to apprehending meaning or sense in Pound’s prose if for no other reason than the fact that they are the exception, and certainly not the rule. More importantly, however, from a contemporary critic’s perspective, is that we have the luxury of an existing body of work to refer to for elucidation. In the case of prose pieces like “Patria Mia”(1912) or “Instigations”(1920), we not only have his other prose published in the paper to offer some context, but his poems to offer insight. These prose essays show a man of great youthful humour who is aware of his own failures and wastes

⁸ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” in William Cookson, *Selected Prose 1909-1965: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 34

⁹ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester: Macherster University Press, 1964) 131

no time in pointing them out. But that is not to say that he was not passionate or stubborn in his convictions.

Pound's writing on America has great relevance to his literary agenda even when his topic seemed to be completely historical or political. Most of his writing on America appeared in the pages of *The New Age* in the 1910s, and these writings stemmed from his early hope for an American literary awakening. Whether he was writing about literature or life, his motive was fundamentally the same: to refresh, to revitalise and to 'make new' with the hope of a *Risorgimento* in his time. For Pound, this *Risorgimento* is an American Renaissance, a rebirth, an awakening of the unexplored rich cultural heritage that Pound is convinced America is yet to experience. He wrote that this phenomenon "will have its effect not only in the arts, but in life, in politics, and in economics." For Pound life was predicated by art, and the development of society through this monumental movement, this *Risorgimento*, would be in a path forged by great artists. Pound wrote, "If I seem to lay undue stress upon the status of the arts, it is only because the arts respond to an intellectual movement more swiftly and more apparently than do institutions, and not because there is any better reason for discussing them first."¹⁰

What is observed in Pound's early prose, especially in his work published in *The New Age*, is evidence of the importance of Pound's critique, a man without whom the modernist revolution in American literature is, arguably, inconceivable. In early Pound we can read the idea of "poetry as an instrument of change, a change that would take place foremost in the poem itself, as a question of language and structure as well as of a related, all-connecting ideological vision."¹¹ For Ezra Pound, the American in exile "who being poet only / Can give thee poor words only,"¹² this

¹⁰ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *The New Age* XI.23 (October 2, 1912), 539a

¹¹ Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris, eds. *Poems for the Millennium*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 2

¹² Ezra Pound, "Scriptor Ignotus" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: Literary Classics of the United States) 30-31

change starts with his involvement with *Poetry* and the *Little Review*, the encouragement of Joyce, and Eliot, and Williams, the advocacy of *vers libre*, Provence and the Troubadours, Li-Po, and the radical movements of Imagism and Vorticism. Through the rebirth of *The New Freewoman* as *The Egoist*, through the changing flags of Imagism(e) and Vorticism, the only consistent presence through these years was the idiosyncratic voice of Ezra Pound in *The New Age*.

It is in *The New Age* that Pound seemed both to discover and express this political voice most frequently in the 1910's. Noel Stock discusses Pound's desire for 'direct action': "His primary concern was with the life of the mind, but close on its heels came the desire to harness the mind to action."¹³ Pound came under the influence of Orage and *The New Age* circle after at least five years worth of study and exploration of the medieval frame of mind, mixed with a healthy dose of love-cult mysticism. As Orage had been before encountering *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Pound was engaged with love mysticism and occult philosophy. It is no doubt from Orage that Pound received the primary pull away from treating ideas in the pursuit of beauty as isolated from life but to relate them to real action. This awareness brought Pound to a conviction of social reform as it had for Orage over a decade earlier: "Throughout the period, [...] art or 'the intelligence' was the driving force behind most of Pound's pronouncements bearing on the ordering of human affairs."¹⁴ The realm of human affairs was passionately argued from varied perspectives in *The New Age* and Pound was one of those voices in the gallery. The journal played a central role in the development of Pound's cultural critique during his first decade in London.

The New Age was born out of the intellectual determination of Holbrook Jackson, A.J. Penty, and A.R. Orage. Orage and Jackson met in Leeds in 1900 and

¹³ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964) 162

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 163

together became very involved with the study and application of Nietzschean principles. That same year Orage became close with A.J. Penty, an early Guild Socialist and part of the arts and crafts movement, who influenced Orage's thoughts on economics. Holbrook was a Fabian Socialist and lace merchant who was involved in political and literary circles in London while Penty was a manufacturer and architect and "his radical suggestions regarding industrialism fertilized their discussions of political theory."¹⁵ Within just a few years they were formulating ideas about the relationship between culture and Socialism and considered founding a periodical. First they created the Leeds Arts Club, which brought G.B. Shaw and Chesterton into their circle, and between 1905 and 1906 Jackson, Penty and Orage relocated to London. With other dissidents from the Fabian Society, they resolved to form the Fabian Arts Group in January 1907, a subordinate society whose explicit aims were to address the relationship of the guilds and the arts to Socialism.

Trying to sustain himself through freelance independent journalism was a real financial challenge for Orage, so he and Jackson considered buying a defunct periodical called *The New Age*. *The New Age* was purchased in 1907 with support from G.B. Shaw and Lewis Wallace, a Fabian and a Theosophist, and Orage was installed as its editor. Charging just 1p per issue, the 'No Wage' nickname was quickly earned and with nothing to pay its contributors, Orage welcomed work from a large variety of sources. He wrote in 1908, "We shall invite and welcome discussion even when, as sometimes happens, our own cherished convictions are the first to be challenged."¹⁶ It is for this reason that *The New Age* was a journal that was able to capture a record of short-lived social and cultural movements and attitudes in

¹⁵ Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967)

19. Unless otherwise stated, all of the historical background that follows on Orage and *The New Age* is from Martin's study.

¹⁶ A.R. Orage, "To Our Readers" *The New Age* II.26(April 25, 1908) 503b

the early 20th century. Wallace Martin writes, “one of the most interesting aspects of *The New Age* is its reflection, month by month, of the prevailing mood of its time.”¹⁷

Another major feature of *The New Age* is the publication of disparate and conflicting viewpoints. This editorial technique was born out of continued dissidence in the Fabian Society where Orage, Cecil Chesterton, H.G. Wells and others saw the conservative leadership of the Executive muffling the medium of free expression and jeopardizing the future of the society. Concluding that *The New Age* would be of more value to the Socialist movement if it embodied this seemingly disappearing element of free discussion, Orage entertained the possibility of criticising Fabian policies, the backbone of the journal’s support. This sort of stubborn ideology was the core of an editorial policy that would see Orage seek out writers who showed individuality and either achievement or promise, actively inviting their contributions and nurturing their crafts. He also printed contributions exactly as they were written. Both of these editorial practices were uncommon¹⁸ and helped to make *The New Age* one of the most important cultural and political journals of the early 20th century.

Wallace Martin presents a case for this cultural and political relevance in *The New Age under Orage* (1967). He explains that the expansion of the reading public brought on by the Education Acts of 1870, 1876, and 1880, laid the foundation for a reading public, then “came the wave of Secondary Education that gave us a slightly superior crop of readers.”¹⁹ There was a great opportunity for writers because of a new wealth of readers, “more public, more publicity, more publishers, and more patronage.”²⁰ The Education Acts gave birth to what has been called a new social class, a reading class. Orage writes, “our readers belong mainly to Matthew Arnold’s

¹⁷ Wallace Martin, *‘The New Age’ Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 128

¹⁸ Ibid., 34

¹⁹ A.R. Orage “Unedited Opinions: Concerning ‘The New Age’” *The New Age* IV.14 (January 29, 1909) 280a

²⁰ Martin, *‘The New Age’ Under Orage* 6

fourth class, the class, namely, that lies outside the three weltering classes [Barbarians, Philistines, and the Populace], and is composed of individuals who have overcome their class prejudices.”²¹

The New Age explored new subjects, began new philosophies, announced new artistic movements, and provided a forum for debate during a crucial phase in the relations between Socialists and the newly created Labour Party. As has been accounted for elsewhere²², *The New Age* contributed to the development and recognition of modernism as well as the areas of philosophy, psychology (one of the first places in England to discuss psycho-analysis and Sigmund Freud), politics, and economics (C.H. Douglas). Into this environment of varied viewpoints came the young American poet Ezra Pound.

After Holbrook Jackson left *The New Age* in 1907, F.S. Flint became the poetry critic for the journal and within two years, T.E. Hulme and Ezra Pound had joined the circle. Together the poets worked to bring *vers libre* to English verse and Flint was Orage’s literary correspondent. Their efforts created “the forgotten school of 1909” to whom Pound referred in his introduction to “The Complete Poetical Works of T.E. Hulme” that appeared in *Ripostes* (1912). By 1911, Flint ceased to be a contributor to *The New Age*, Hulme became more interested in philosophy, and Orage invited Pound to become a regular contributor. This new position was the

²¹ A.R. Orage “Unedited Opinions: Concerning ‘The New Age’” *The New Age* IV.14 (January 29, 1909) 280a

²² Many aspects of what was to become the modernist movement were featured in *The New Age*, including the works of Ezra Pound, Katherine Mansfield, T.E. Hulme, Wyndham Lewis, Jacob Epstein and Picasso. While Wallace Martin makes this observation in his 1967 study, he has not been the last. A few examples where this observation has been a part of the critical argument can also be read in Michael Coyle’s *Ezra Pound, Popular Genres, and the Discourse of Culture* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995) or Ann L. Ardis’ *Modernism and Cultural Conflict 1980-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), to name just two. “The Modernist Journals Project” from Robert Scholes and Robert Latham at Brown University and The University of Tulsa also makes this connection; *The New Age* was the first digitized journal on the project and the website reads “The magazine played a central role in the debates over modernism and in the social and political issues of the day.”

beginning of Pound's relationship of over a decade with *The New Age*, a central influence on his ideas and Pound's steady source of income 1911-1922.

With an evolving literary programme *The New Age* "absorbed a number of new cultural forces and became the haven of the new writers and artists who emerged just before the war."²³ Pound was handpicked by Orage to represent the literary programme of the journal and he was introduced with the editorial note, "under this heading Mr. Pound will contribute expositions and translations in illustration of 'The New Method' in scholarship."²⁴ His first significant prose contribution to *The New Age* was called "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and began with a translation of 'The Seafarer' (to be discussed in Chapter Five). It was published in twelve parts between November 1911 and February 1912 and is his first long piece of criticism since *The Spirit of Romance* (1910). The series marks the beginning of Pound's self-fashioned role as an assistant in the rebirth of poetry. This ambition is made clear by the choice of title for the series; its referent emphasizes the value Pound places on 'discovering' and determining worth or value. Isis gathered the dismembered limbs of Osiris, her dead brother, whose consequent rebirth was the legendary basis of an Egyptian fertility ritual. Upon his rebirth, Osiris became the Judge of the Dead, "and Pound with his capacity for taking in all the world's myths pictured himself as one who could, like Isis, restore life to the dead."²⁵ By identifying himself with Isis, Pound revealed an ambition to bring lesser-known creative talents to a wider audience through his translations, thereby instigating in the process new and fertile ground for the rebirth of English poetry. In expressing the ambition of bringing art to a wider audience in *The New Age*, Pound implicitly acknowledged Orage's belief that his journal was an organ of policy or

²³ Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 143

²⁴ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" *The New Age* X.5 (November 30, 1911) 107a

²⁵ William Pratt, ed. *Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth* (AMS Press: New York, 2002) 7

public opinion. Further, Pound's notion of a rebirth in poetry gained a wider cultural relevance in the company of Orage.

The idea of a renaissance was a concept circulating in the *The New Age* group. Wallace Martin explains that hypothesizing about the future was an obsession of G.B. Shaw, Gilbert Cannan, Allen Upward, and other contributors to *The New Age*. Orage encouraged these sorts of predictions with lines like, "who is so bold as to dare forecast the nature of the epoch that is now opening?"²⁶

In "Patria Mia"(1912), the series that Pound contributed immediately after "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", Pound made such a prediction by announcing the imminence of a Risorgimento or renaissance. Moreover, Pound believed it could begin in the United States. Over the next three years after "American Chances and Remedies"(May-June 1913) and his "Approach to Paris"(September 1913), the cultural awakening was to be centered in London, and by 1919, it seemed Pound would have to take his Risorgimento elsewhere.

Although initially employed for his dedication to poetry, *The New Age* provided Pound with an opportunity to exercise his political voice while working out his aesthetic programme. As mentioned, Pound published more than 260 articles, poems, and letters, as himself, and under pseudonyms B.H. Dias (painting) and William Atheling (music). *The New Age* represented a crossroads of two dominant radical ideological postures of Britain before the war: the Fabians and the Ruskin-influenced Reactionaries. As Leon Surette summarizes the political landscape surrounding Pound and *The New Age*, the Fabians were atheist democratic socialists whose political arm reached into the Labour Party who had great faith in technological progress, in the future, and the desire to cure social ills. The reactionaries were less cohesive. They were Catholic and backward-looking in their

²⁶ A.R. Orage in Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 129

social and political thinking.²⁷ Their loudest voices were Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc who offered solutions to the inherent instability of free enterprise capitalism that valued the individual over the state. This perspective proved to be attractive to Pound and the group's spiritual value was important to radical Right-leaning Christians, Theosophists, and those like Pound who believed that art expressed spiritual values.²⁸ The world of *The New Age* sought some middle ground between these two political forces and Pound's aesthetic worked to incorporate the social. His cultural critique became informed by Orage and *The New Age* circle. He found fault with the systems of publication, with the masses and 'provincialism' of public intelligence, and by 1919, 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' and C.H. Douglas' "Economic Democracy" appear simultaneously in *The New Age* and Pound began to see the root of society's inability to afford the arts in 'underconsumption' which launched the notion of social credit.

Pound had met Major C. H. Douglas and wrote of Orage and Douglas meeting.²⁹ Douglas was the leader of a theoretical economic reform called Social Credit. The basic idea behind Social Credit theory was an under-consumptionist argument, that is, that the income of the nation is less than the market price of the nation's produce. Surette illustrates with an A+B theorem³⁰: the total collective payments to individuals in wages, salaries, and dividends(A) plus the aggregate costs of materials, bank charges, royalties, and taxes(B) equal the total price, therefore the citizens of a nation would be unable to buy the produce of that nation. Douglas viewed interest charges as the main cause of shortfall. Social Credit theories advocated an "honest" monetary system against bank credit as a debt repayable by interest. Social Credit asserted the principle of the cultural inheritance; when money

²⁷ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 21-22

²⁸ *ibid*, 22

²⁹ Ezra Pound, *Impact: Essays on Ignorance and the Decline of American Civilization* Noel Stock, ed. (New York: New Directions, 1973) 64-66

³⁰ Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* 29

has been turned into a commodity merely to be bought and sold, the nation and its culture suffer. These views were exactly Pound's own and he espoused the cause of Social Credit with his usual enthusiasm and vigour. Both Social Credit and Pound's relationship with it in *The New Age* will be expanded upon in Chapter 3.

By 1917 England as the "Centre of the Awakening" was losing its attraction, and Pound began to feel frustrated and isolated. The face of Europe and the world had changed drastically since the industrial revolution. The dominant ideology in the English speaking world was the matrix of democratic liberalism, post-christian utilitarian morality, and free enterprise economics.³¹ World War One shook these pillars of society. World industry, which was at first dominated by Britain, was no longer exclusively British: "A feeling of the decline of civilization, an apocalyptic mood, had set in that came to be known as 'the English sickness'."³² British art was seen to be in a state of impotence in this period and what was happening was "a fairly unsystematic assimilation of the innovatory styles of European art—Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, Kandinsky."³³ The network of artists that developed before the war left many disillusioned after it. One cannot overlook the network of relations and developmental interactions between Imagisme, Hulme's Neoclassicism, cubism, and Futurism.³⁴ The war affected Pound in many ways. When sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brezska was killed in action, Pound immediately set out to compile a memoir. Gaudier-Brezska's death represented a tragic loss for society since artists were, to Pound, the natural leaders of civilization. But also, with Lewis also enlisted, Gaudier-Brezska's death put a dent in Pound's plans of an artistic renaissance. Torrey notes that following Gaudier-Brezska's death, the voice of Ezra Pound became increasingly caustic and strident: "The subsequent outpouring of

³¹ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 14

³² Paul Edwards, ed., *BLAST: Vorticism 1914-1918* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2000) 14

³³ *Ibid.*, 11

³⁴ Cianci, Giovanni, ed., *Wyndham Lewis: Letteratura/Pittura*. (Palermo: Sellerio 1982) 19

vituperation served to isolate him still further from polite London society."³⁵ Pound proceeded most confidently in the face of opposition.

Pound was not enjoying the respect and interest he had initially received those first years in London: "Everyone was criticizing him, and since the publication of *BLAST*, trying to dissociate themselves from him."³⁶ Vorticism was seen as a silly movement, and this did not reflect well on Pound who had promoted his movement with a style in imitation of Marinetti. His brash and vigilant attitude worked against him during the war. Many contemporaries began not to care at all for what Pound had to say about poetry, let alone politics and economics: "The opinion of everyone is that he has nothing more to say," and Amy Lowell writes, "I am afraid that he is tuberculous. It has even been hinted that this may have attacked his brain."³⁷

Pound fought his personal war as central powers began theirs in 1914. Pound continued his battle beyond 1918. This increasing frustration and dissatisfaction pushed an already self-confident revolutionary spirit to further extremes of an 'us versus them' mentality. Hugh Kenner sees this era as a major turning point for Pound's thoughts and thought processes, "The long term psychic damage Pound underwent is beyond calculation."³⁸ The personal exile and economic isolation can be seen to have driven Pound with great conviction to new avenues of expression and new topics in his cultural critique. *The New Age* was the central location of these intellectual expressions:

THE NEW AGE permits one to express beliefs which are in direct opposition to those held by the editing staff. In this, THE NEW AGE sets a most commendable example to certain other periodicals which not only demand that all writers in their columns shall turn themselves into a weak puling copy

³⁵ E. Fuller Torrey, *The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secret's of St. Elizabeth's*. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1984) 85

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 80

³⁷ Lowell in Torrey, 80

³⁸ Hugh Kenner in Torrey, 82

of the editorial board, but even try to damage one's income if one ventures to express contrary beliefs in the columns of other papers.³⁹

³⁹ Ezra Pound, "Affirmations II: Vorticism" *The New Age* XVI.II (January 14, 1915) 277a

CHAPTER 2

Pound, Exile and the World

The author of the prose pieces, “Patria Mia” and “Indiscretions”, published in *The New Age* in 1912 and 1920 respectively, is a man who imagines himself an island, at odds with the tyrannies imposed all around him, isolated and excluded from the rest of the world. This dissertation will show that Pound’s sense of exclusion was pivotal in his path of self-exile from America to London, and from London to Paris. This chapter shall focus on his personal sense of exclusion or his psychological isolation as shown in his work in *The New Age*.

From the prose writings of Ezra Pound in *The New Age* it is quite easy to gather the general impression that he was dissatisfied, dissatisfied with money, art, democracy, the world at large, and perhaps even himself: “Of course, any man who thinks is a bore. He will either make you think or he will despise, irritate, and insult you if you don’t, and all this is very distressing.”⁴⁰ There is very little that escapes Pound’s sardonic finger-pointing, neither the author nor his audience: “One should always compromise with fools. One should always be sure to please a majority of the dullards, if one desires immediate results.”⁴¹

As has been suggested by existing critical studies of Pound⁴², this dissatisfaction may stem from his observations of civilization, the Modernist movement’s aversion to Georgian decadence, his study of varied works of world

⁴⁰ Ezra Pound, “Allen Upward Serious” *The New Age* XIV.25 (April 23, 1914) 779a

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 780a

⁴² Critical and biographical studies express Pound’s dissatisfaction with various elements of society and/or literature as a part of their own arguments whether in discussion of *Personae* or *The Cantos*. The tone of nearly all of Pounds prose writings demand this sort of reading: we find it in Kenner, Davie, Wittemeyer, Heyman, Bacigalupo, Surette, Coyle, among others. Additionally, this idea of dissatisfaction appears beyond scholarship on Pound in studies of Eliot, Lewis, and modernism more generally. It is a key feature of Modernism and the critical heritage is a testament to that.

literature, history, and social sciences. It could also be argued, as is the position of this dissertation, that Pound's dissatisfaction was something that existed before his examination of world civilizations and stemmed from a highly personalized and subjective interpretation of the world, a world that he not only felt had exiled him, but from which he worked to exile himself. For Ezra Pound, the *feeling* of exclusion never left, but informed many of his positions on art, America, and the world. Pound's exile, real and imagined, is central to his self-definition and expressions as an artist and critic in *The New Age*:

Before you were, America!

*I did not begin with you,
I did not end with you, America.*

"From Chebar"⁴³

An analysis of Pound's early years indicates that he had grown up aware that he was being marginalised. This awareness ultimately impacted his work as an analysis of his writings in *The New Age* will show, and his biographical history provides possible foundations for this awareness.

Pound has been described as taking great pride in stories of his grandfather, Thaddeus Pound, a Republican congressman and rail and lumber businessman "fighting the kikefied usurers." His family was full of 'old-stock' Americans and he witnessed in his own life many ways that new Americans were pushing families like his to the margins. His grandmother educated him in the history of the Wadsworth side of the family and their arrival in America in 1632. The Pounds and the Westons claimed an impeccable American pedigree but in Pound's mind, they were perceptibly descending in the world.⁴⁴

⁴³ Ezra Pound, "From Chebar" *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound* Michael John King, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1976) 269. Categorised under 'Poems from Miscellaneous Manuscripts' and first printed in *Atlantic Monthly*, 1976

⁴⁴ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 3

The Pound family moved to Philadelphia in 1889 where the influx of foreigners and hordes of Europe's refugees were flooding the domain of the 'native' middle class. This pushed the Pound family into suburban exile, a trend that was prevalent in many twentieth century American cities. "I was," he wrote in 1920, 'brought up in a district and city with which my forebears had no connection, and I am therefore accustomed to being an alien, and it is just as homelike for me to be an alien in one place as in another.' And he told Thomas Hardy: 'I come from an American suburb—where I was not born—where both parents are really foreigners.'"⁴⁵

In terms of the life of an artist, the kind of life an artist needs to live to produce *good art*, Pound learned to appreciate the idea of isolation as a critical ingredient. The artist needs to be separated, exiled to master his/her craft. There exist tales of his namesake, great uncle Ezra Weston, who founded an artist colony at Nyack. Weston seems to have been a great optimist, a provider and host, establishing what he intended as a refuge from city life for the artistic. Weston had hoped to become a fostering force for young artists escaping the expense and hustle of the city, acquiring the artistic distance to create good work. The venture was not the success he must have hoped for and he ended up having several inhabitants who became dependents, offering minimal contributions, if any, to the upkeep or cost of the household. After a short period of time, the project failed financially, the building was taken over by the mortgage company, and the Westons subsequently opened a boarding house in mid-Manhattan. When Pound's uncle was put into the care of a hospital later in his life, a hospital report spoke of him as someone who "seemed to have visionary powers that had gone astray."⁴⁶ While we can be sure that the second half of the assessment would also apply to Pound, it is necessary to understand those

⁴⁵ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 23

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 6

visions as he expressed them in *The New Age*, determining whether they were indeed powers, or poisons, visions that he sought to sort out when he first went into the wider world.

There can be little doubt that by the time the decision to move to London was made in 1908 Pound had already experienced ample personal rejection in his native land. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania where he seemed simultaneously to separate himself from the herd and be excluded by them. He was two years younger than most students and he did not live on campus but rather took the train home to his parents' house each day. In a freshman class photograph, the others are seen to wear ties and no hats; Pound, by contrast, wears a floppy beret and a big white cravat appearing quite obviously at odds with all of the other students. Although he did apply to pledge, he was unable to join a fraternity at either college he attended. At the University of Pennsylvania, he was not elected to any fraternity. When transferred to Hamilton College after two years, a move that pleased him, he attempted to join a fraternity again because it did seem, after all, important to him. His invitation to membership was abruptly withdrawn and he became one of only a handful of students not pledged to any fraternity. Pound, the isolated artist, was exiled from his peers and an outsider at his college.

When Pound subsequently took up a position teaching French and Spanish at Wabash College, he experienced another sort of rejection. The story is reported that Pound walked into town on a snowy night to post a letter and he met a penniless, stranded girl from a traveling burlesque show. He fed her and took her to his rooms where she spent the night in his bed while he, according to college records, slept on his study floor. He left for an early class and she remained in the room. When the cleaning staff came to tidy the room and found a young, perhaps underage, woman, the affair was made public, and he was released from his duties almost immediately.

He makes comments on the event in a letter to William Carlos Williams revealing a youthful, even childish, disdain for authority. His idealistic naïveté and lack of awareness of what is and what is not socially acceptable is apparent in his own words when he states:

If you ever get degraded, branded with infamy, etc., for feeding a person who needs food, you will probably rise up and bless the present and sacred name of Madame Grundy for all her holy hypocrisy. I am not getting bitter. I have been more than blessed for my kindness and the few shekels cast on the water have come back ten fold and I have no fight with anybody.⁴⁷

Pound's disdain for authority seems mellowed by "the few shekels" that have come back to him. However, he tends to pit himself against all tyrannies in the name of liberty. Pound imagines himself as a Voltaire-like figure fighting the hypocrisies of the Madame Grundy's of the world, a self-positioning that would inform much of his writing in *The New Age*.

Pound chose not to specialise in his studies both at the University of Pennsylvania and at Hamilton College, opting for variety in educational diet. Originally studying comparative literature "with the definite intention of finding out what had been written and how"⁴⁸ at the University of Pennsylvania and moving to complete his course at Hamilton where he studied Romance languages and Anglo-Saxon, was awarded a bachelor's degree and pursued post-graduate studies in Romance languages at University of Pennsylvania. An obvious intellectual, H.D. was to call him "immensely sophisticated, immensely superior",⁴⁹ and an equally obvious outsider, he later writes in *The New Age*, "It is lamentably true that the colleges and universities talk democracy and breed snobbishness, and that they lean toward petty monopoly. But this breeds an occasional rebel, by a process not

⁴⁷ Ezra Pound, to William Carlos Williams (October 21, 1908) in *Selected Letters 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London: 1950) 5

⁴⁸ Ezra Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 37

⁴⁹ Pound in Carpenter, 61

dissimilar to vaccination.”⁵⁰ Pound fails literary criticism at graduate school and leaves without a doctorate, exiled from the academic community. The future literary critic of *The New Age* was a self-defined rebel, “subjected to a system which aims at mediocrity, which is set to crush out all impulse and personality; which aims not to make men but automata.”⁵¹

Noel Stock has written that Pound’s career was riddled with problems that stemmed from a revolutionary and anti-conservative nature. We can use knowledge of the author’s life to inform readings of his work in poetry and prose in *The New Age*. And perhaps this type of reading will fall under what Stock has called, “the disease of modern criticism (or criticism crossed with biography),” but relevant biography and the context of his life and work *does* help us read the importance of Pound’s emerging aesthetics and politics as explicated in his prose works in *The New Age* without ever putting at risk his status as a great poet and thinker of 20th century literature.⁵²

Following in the footsteps of Henry James and J.M. Whistler, Pound left America in 1908 to make his literary reputation in London. With reference to America, Pound writes, “if you have any vital interest in art and letters, and happen to like talking about them, you sooner or later leave that country.”⁵³ For many reasons, London could be the perfect stage for Pound. He was determined to meet and work with publishers and other poets. He could also benefit from the outsider’s position and use that vantage point to his artistic and social advantage. To find an

⁵⁰ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies II” *The New Age* XIII.2 (May 8, 1913) 34a

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Stock, Noel. *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1964, viii-x. (In his study Stock expresses the approach of New Criticism. He expresses a frustration with criticism that attempts to create psychological readings, specifically ones that undermine Pound’s poetry. He confines himself to aspects of Pounds life which are contained in his own writings, not inspecting his ‘state of mind’ just what formed his mind. He says that those who have introduced irrelevant biography and psychology in the assessment of his work have obscured the essential history of modern poetry. Stock’s position is that life does not explain poetry, the work is its own explanation.)

⁵³ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia X”, *The New Age* XII.1 (November 7, 1912), 12b

audience for his work, Pound moves to Britain. There he discovers an advantage of being an American in that he could publish observations of his homeland and be instantly received by his new British audience as an authority. Additionally, Pound conceives that he will be celebrated more at home having been a published poet in Britain. He fashions positions for himself as 'foreign editor' for *Poetry* and later, *The Little Review*, seeking out talent on the 'front-lines' of English poetry. So in the pursuit of connecting with an audience, Pound moves to Britain to appeal to that country, and to be a sort of authority on his own, and in return, earn respect *in his own*.

In 1911, after three years in London and at the age of 26 years, Pound was asked to contribute regularly to A.R. Orage's *The New Age*.⁵⁴ Orage, we will remember, edited the Fabian and Guild Socialist London weekly *The New Age* from 1907-1922, a journal that encouraged the publication of strong and varied opinions from a wide cross-section of writers on the topics of economics, spiritualism, politics, literature and the arts. For Orage, the decision to invite contributions from Pound was a risk. After all, Pound did not have a flawless track record. Reviews of *The Spirit of Romance*, Pound's first published book of prose taken from lectures he had delivered at the London Polytechnic, were relentlessly negative. Pound expresses his feelings about prose in a letter to his mother, when he writes, "if anything is not sufficiently interesting to be put into poetry... it is hardly worth saying at all,"⁵⁵ and summarises his shortcomings as a prose writer: "My mind, such as I have, works by a sort of fusion, and sudden crystallization, and the effort to tie that kind of action to the dray work of prose is very exhausting. One should have a vegetable sort of mind for prose."⁵⁶ Contributing to *The New Age* was, for Pound, a great affirmation of the

⁵⁴ Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 175

⁵⁵ Ezra Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 125

⁵⁶ Humphrey Carpenter. *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 141

importance of his opinions. His connection to *The New Age* also allowed him to venture “forth to explore and digest as much of London as fell within the range of his interests and sensibilities.”⁵⁷

Pound’s writing on America has great relevance to his literary agenda even when his topic seems to be completely historical or political. Most of his writing on America appears in the pages of *The New Age* in the 1910s, and these writings stem from his early hope for an American literary awakening. Whether he is writing about literature or life, his motive is fundamentally the same: to refresh, to revitalise and to ‘make new’ with the hope of a *Risorgimento* in his time. For Pound, this *Risorgimento* is an American Renaissance, a rebirth, an awakening of the unexplored rich cultural heritage that Pound is convinced America is yet to experience. He writes that this phenomenon “will have its effect not only in the arts, but in life, in politics, and in economics.” For Pound, life is predicated by art, and the development of society through this monumental movement, this *Risorgimento*, would be a path forged by great artists. Pound writes, “If I seem to lay undue stress upon the status of the arts, it is only because the arts respond to an intellectual movement more swiftly and more apparently than do institutions, and not because there is any better reason for discussing them first.”⁵⁸

The New Age was not a primarily a literary magazine. Alfred Richard Orage, the editor from 1907-1922, had emerged from working class poverty “through the good offices of the Coote family,”⁵⁹ and later moved to London following his friends Holbrook Jackson and Arthur J. Pentty. Together they founded the Fabian Arts Group and, with the financial backing of Theosophist, Lewis Wallace, and Fabian, George Bernard Shaw, purchased the fledgling journal, *The New Age*. Founded in 1894, the

⁵⁷ Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound*. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1970) 110

⁵⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia V”. *The New Age* XI.23 (October 2, 1912), 539a

⁵⁹ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 48

journal had a tradition of mixing religious and social interests and under Orage, *The New Age* would primarily consist of social and political commentary with an added focus on the arts. Tim Redman describes the journal as a vehicle “to enrich political theory through a systematic examination of the implications of socialism for the arts, literature, and philosophy.”⁶⁰ By the time Pound made his first contribution, *The New Age* “had acquired a reputation as one of the most important weekly papers of its time.”⁶¹ But it must be noted that even in this environment, Pound was to hold the position of outsider, as Orage writes in 1913, “Mr. Pound—I say this with all respect—is an enemy of *The New Age*.”⁶²

The topics addressed by Pound’s earliest works for the journal reveal the manner in which Pound positions himself as a critic in London. His first contribution, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”(November 30, 1911-February 22, 1912) is an overtly ‘aesthetic’ piece that addresses Pound’s concern to create a ‘living art’, a poetry that lives “close to the thing” so that it can “be a vital part of contemporary life.” This article can be classified as a ‘literary’ essay, although it is interesting to note that T.S. Eliot did not include this piece in his *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*(1954). In this work we can find Pound’s discussion of his commitments to poetry, and art as a whole, in their infancy. Pound introduces “A New Method” in scholarship, that of “luminous detail.” His emphases on avoiding hyperbole and for a directness of utterance, later his “direct treatment” of the thing, find their roots in this series of aesthetic articles. To “render emotions precisely”⁶³ and with “trembling clarity”⁶⁴ are early concerns of Pound, before the formal doctrine of Imagisme. We witness the beginning of his life-long struggle for art as the core of life and not the frill and

⁶⁰ Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 21

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 18

⁶² Orage, A.R. (as R.H.C.), ‘Readers and Writers’. *The New Age* XIV.2 (November 13, 1913) 51b

⁶³ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris III: Guido Cavalcanti” *The New Age* X.7 (December 14, 1911) 155

⁶⁴ Ezra Pound, Sonnet VII and XXXV, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris III: Guido Cavalcanti” *The New Age* (December 14, 1911) 155a

ornament that modern man makes it out to be: “As long as the poet says not what he, at the very crux of a clarified conception, means, but is content to say something ornate and approximate, just so long will serious people, intently alive, consider poetry as balderdash—a sort of embroidery of dilettantes and women.”⁶⁵ These early pieces are illustrations of Pound’s self-positioning as critic, literary and social, from the outset in *The New Age*. We will see through the course of this dissertation that his critical position changes as his prose poetry and poetic vision develops.

The next contribution Pound makes to *The New Age* does not appear until more than half a year later. The first, “Patria Mia” (September 5, 1912-November 14, 1912), expresses Pound’s views of America upon revisiting his homeland after 4 years in exile. In the next series, “Through Alien Eyes”(January 16, 1913-February 6, 1913), Pound turns his critical gaze toward Britain. The subsequent series, “America: Chances and Remedies”(May 1, 1913-June 5 1913), is Pound’s assessment of the obstacles to an American Risorgimento occurring in his time. The following series, “The Approach to Paris”(September 4, 1913-October 16, 1913), deals with slightly more aesthetic concerns and looks to French literature for inspiration. Overall, the four articles that follow “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” deal with much less overtly aesthetic concerns. The implicit trend in these pieces moves from a commentary on America to an affirmation of his status as “alien.” Pound affirms his alien status in the critique of the American mind and culture in “Patria Mia.” He turns his “alien” gaze to the cultural problems in Britain as he sees them in “Through Alien Eyes”, and finally, he looks to France for cultural and artistic direction in “The Approach to Paris”. The exile brings a critique of America, then Britain and the “intellectual life of Christendom”, and eventually ‘approaches’ Paris and the biographical irony is apparent as Pound, dissatisfied, did leave America for Britain, and, years later,

⁶⁵ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris XI” *The New Age* X.16 (February 15, 1912) 370a

dissatisfied with Britain he moved to Paris. Throughout, Pound was exercising his “alien eyes”, an acquired objectivity that no editorial influence or national loyalty would compromise and the critical perspective that would come to define his literary output.

“Patria Mia” was created out of experiences and observations the exile had made on his 1910 visit to America, a trip where he was both an exile returning to his native land with new perspectives and an exile from his expanding life in London. He wrote to Margaret Cravens, “The country seems strange to my eyes that have grown more European than I knew.”⁶⁶ “Through Alien Eyes” immediately addresses Pound’s exile status in England, a country where he chooses to work because the country is “a comfortable, musty old studio where no one runs carpet sweepers under my easel.” He permits himself to observe his surroundings with a rhetorical distance that comes with his position as exile. He writes in *The New Age*, “I know that I am perched on the rotten shell of a crumbling empire, but it isn’t my empire, and I’m not legally responsible.”⁶⁷ It was this empire that had granted him praise as a poet, praise that led him back to America in 1910. But his reception was not what he expected and although some critical responses to his poetry were positive, being the American poet celebrated in England, but fully welcomed nowhere, reinforced his sense of exile. But he was comfortable in this position. The Romantic notion of voluntary exiles with a social mission had excited his creativity in 1908 when he wrote:

Praise to the lonely ones!
Give praise out of your ease
To them whom the farther seas
Bore out from amongst you.

We, that through all the world
Have wandered seeking new things

⁶⁶ Ezra Pound in A David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 127

⁶⁷ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes I” *The New Age* XII.11 (January 16, 1913) 252a

And quaint tales, that your ease
 May gather such dreams as please
 you, the Home-stayers.

“Purveyors General”⁶⁸

In writing his critique of America upon returning to Britain and remaining the exile, Pound felt he had a unique perspective from which to evaluate the social and artistic development of both countries:

America is, economically, in a mess, but one feels, or believes one feels, some sort of force—call it the spirit of the country, or a belief in the future—moving to its assistance. Does anyone honestly feel the same for England? As a stranger, who had been courteously received, I tried to maintain the illusion.⁶⁹

Pound’s outsider status in Britain allows his critical voice to evaluate the state of America from his position in London and his American position provides a platform from which to offer a cultural critique of Britain. Pound adopts the outsider position in his critical prose and his position of exile is central to his ability to observe art and society objectively while serving the intellectual life of both countries. Being a self-defined outsider would earn him some authority, or at least provoke some discussion. Pound’s earliest contributions to *The New Age* are in fact letters that appeared in the “Letters to the Editor” section. His first appearance was certainly one that offers us an early glimpse of his sense of humour⁷⁰, but more pointedly, his Letter to the Editor on January 25, 1912, entitled “The Art of the Novel”, illustrates his recognition of the outsider’s perspective and his view of himself in the lineage of American exiles:

I read only two living novelists with anything like respect or attention, to wit, Anatole France, who is very uneven, and Henry James, who is interesting

⁶⁸ Ezra Pound, “Purveyor’s General” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: Literary classics of the United States) 71-72

⁶⁹ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes I” *The New Age* XII.11 (January 16, 1913) 252a

⁷⁰ Ezra Pound, “A Correction”(Letter to the Editor). *The New Age* VI.26 (April 28, 1910)

Pound writes, “In the last NEW AGE I read that ‘Geniuses should not be any more ashamed of their warts than of their heads.’ Accordingly, I lay my hand upon my wart and agree that warts are trumps.”

when he has the tact to choose an interesting subject. They are neither of them English [...] I am not here with a thesis, I am not a 'novel reader.' I am an outsider, interested in all the arts, trying to ask questions about 'the art of the novel,' or at least trying to provoke such further discussion as will clarify the criticism of that art.⁷¹

This entry in *The New Age* exemplifies Pound's brash confidence in expressing his critical and often caustic opinions of celebrated authors, artists, or institutions. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the detached outsider or exile and the passionate reader seems to allow Pound to use one statement to justify the other. In other words, being an exile in England permits Pound to adopt sympathetic critical positions with the subjects that fall within his purview. After all, he claims he is no expert, and is just trying to provoke discussion, provoke being the key term for Pound. At the same time, he seeks the safety in submitting that he may be wrong in his evaluation, as he knows "little or nothing about it."⁷² The expatriate is thus assuming, at least in his own mind, the authority to criticize their work objectively.

This stance of the confident outsider appears in a subsequent letter to the editor in *The New Age*, published in November 21, 1912, which addresses a series of articles entitled, "The Black Crusade." The series, written by Western Islamic scholar Marmaduke Pickthall, offers a pro-Turkish commentary on the Balkan Wars, blaming the rise of 'Moslem fanaticism' on England's abandonment of Turkish moderates. For the first time in *The New Age*, Pound addresses world affairs and expresses an overtly political position, writing:

As an alien, and a man detached from immediate concern in the situation in so far as it concerns England, I would state my position in brief: That of all the silly sentimentalism which I have met in post-Victorian England, this silly pro-Turkish sentimentalism is the silliest. [...] Uncivilised Montenegrins, Servian, decadent Greeks, pestilent Bulgarians, I wish you well, and I pray that you will conserve your ideal of freedom better than men have done in my own 'free' country or in constitutional England.⁷³

⁷¹ Ezra Pound, "The Art of the Novel"(Letter to the Editor). *The New Age* X.13(January 25, 1912), 311

⁷² Ibid., 311

⁷³ Pound, "The Black Crusade"(Letter to the Editor) *The New Age* XII.3(November 21, 1912) 69

So again, we read in Pound's work in *The New Age* a celebration of detachment from international concerns, indeed an exile lacking a 'nation' at all, as a validation of the objectivity of his opinions. Further, his expression of animosity for his own nation again calls attention to his otherness, his alienation, but also works to appeal to the reader as it expresses his detached sophistication.

A final example of the value Pound places on the perspective of the outsider can be read in his creation of two pseudonyms for the reviewing of the music and visual arts in *The New Age* from late 1917-1919, William Atheling and B.H. Dias, respectively. The choice of the name Atheling is interesting for Pound's case. In Anglo-Saxon, the word aetheling or 'Æpeling' denoted a man of noble blood, something Pound was no doubt aware of after his studies in Anglo-Saxon at Hamilton College and his work translating 'The Seafarer' in 1911. The historical figure Edgar Ætheling (11th Century), or Edgar the Outlaw, was born in Hungary and was the only son of the heir to the English throne, Edward the Exile. Surely, this historical resonance in the name of his pseudonym as music critic was not lost on Pound. He chose a name that emphasized his pride in his heritage and background, being of old-American stock "whose forbears went to that country at dates running from 1634-1708"⁷⁴, while at the same time paralleling an awareness of his isolation by relating to Edgar the Outlaw and Edward the Exile.

The phonetic resonance in the name of his art critic persona in *The New Age*, B.H. Dias, was certainly a Poundian pun of the degree he never achieved, Doctor of Philosophy, or Ph.D. B.H. Dias also benefited from the outsider's perspective. In a letter to the editor of *The New Age* July 4, 1918, Harold B. Harrison expresses an appreciation of the art critic for his "independence of mind." He writes:

⁷⁴ Ezra Pound, "This Super-Neutrality" *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21, 1915) 595a

I read his Notes with the greatest interest; more especially as judging by his name I presume that he is a gentleman of Spanish origin—*uno caballero de españa*—and thereby enabled to approach the subject of British Art with a certain amount of detachment of view.⁷⁵

The value Pound gives to objectivity is echoed in his literary concerns and the perspective of the outsider is a defining feature in his evaluation of the status and state of art as well as social ills.

The core of Pound's perspective of alienation or exile is frequently repeated in *The New Age*. As outlined earlier in this chapter, Pound's cultural critique begins from an exploration of America, the homeland he was looking to for a renaissance, a *Risorgimento*. After all, Harriet Monroe had invited Pound to contribute to the new American magazine *Poetry*, a publication in which he could champion his literary concerns, promote the work of others, and make up for his own poetic and doctrinal failures to date: "I have sinned deeply against the doctrine I preach."⁷⁶ Later the same decade he had the *Little Review* and the *Egoist*. The *Little Review* "provided Pound not only with pages in which he could publish Joyce, Lewis, Eliot and himself, all together, without unnecessary delay, but also an editorial soap-box from which he could lay down the law."⁷⁷ But for Pound's wider cultural concerns to be addressed, a unique forum was needed.

For Pound, *The New Age* provided a unique opportunity. More than literature and poetry came within his realm. His social and political critiques were given voice and could be developed through discourses on art and literature and their place in society. Pound recognizes the freedom this journal allowed him when he writes, "The *New Age* was a durable London weekly devoted to guild socialism but allotting a few pages of each issue to art and letters regardless of their economic bearing and indifferent to their capacity to please the British *universitaire* taste."⁷⁸ In Pound's

⁷⁵ Harrold B. Harrison, "Letters to the Editor: Art Notes", *The New Age* XXIII.10 (July 4, 1918) 159a

⁷⁶ Ezra Pound to William Carlos Williams, *Selected Letters*, D.D. Paige, ed., 8

⁷⁷ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964) 59

⁷⁸ Ezra Pound, "Small Magazines", *The English Journal*, Vol XIX, no. 9 (November 1930) 693

words, *The New Age* was “a free forum where every man is allowed to speak his mind.”⁷⁹ Nonetheless, Pound was not as individual as he often professed. Although he may have enjoyed his exile and position as outsider, this did not necessarily mean that he was immune to the ideas of those with whom he chose to surround himself. As Wallace Martin notes, Orage had clear intentions to “increase the intellectual scope of the contributors and to show them how their interests could be related to other fields of thought [...] Orage hoped that each contributor would be led to see his objectives as part of the whole magazine’s policy.”⁸⁰ In *The New Age* Pound was given license to create new arguments and explore extra-literary concerns without the need to appeal to an editorial palate: “THE NEW AGE permits one to express beliefs which are in direct opposition to those held by the editing staff.”⁸¹ The focus of this chapter and the argument of this dissertation is that Pound’s ideas were formed by the experience of writing for *The New Age* and thus not a product of an insane genius, as it is often written, but rather a part of a wider intellectual move towards personal and economic isolation and to fascism. Even Pound himself understood that although the individual can work in groups as well as in isolation, that intellectual exile is an impossible condition for development. He writes:

How can we go on thinking that an individual is a thing which is born, grows, reproduces itself and dies. That is a superior and inveterate manner of being an individual. But groups! They are not precisely born. Their life makes and unmakes itself, as an unstable state of matter, a condensation which does not endure. They show us that life is, at the origin, a provisional attitude, a moment of exception, an intensity between abatements, nothing continuous, nothing decisive. The first *togethers* take life by a sort of slow success, then they extinguish themselves without catastrophe, no element perishing in the breaking of the whole. The crown before the foreign barracks comes to life little by little as water in a kettle that sings and evaporates. The galleries of the Odéon do not live at night; every day they are real for certain hours. At the start life seems momentary; then life is intermittent. To make it durable,

⁷⁹ Ezra Pound, “The Black Crusade” (Letter to the Editor) *The New Age* XII.3 (November 21, 1912) 69

⁸⁰ Wallace Martin, *The New Age Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 44

⁸¹ Ezra Pound, “Affirmations II: Vorticism” *The New Age* XVI.11 (January 14, 1915) 277

that it should become a development and a destiny, that it should be clearly marked off at two ends by birth and death, a deal of habit is required.⁸²

Pound positions himself as but one part of a complicated whole with a beginning and an end, constantly evolving and constantly being impacted by the environment in which he is involved. The isolated individual can operate without consequence to the whole, but not without consequence to himself.

At the beginning of his relationship to the journal, after a return to America in the summer of 1910, Pound begins work on a series of articles for *The New Age* that would call for an American *Risorgimento*, for an intellectual awakening in all matters of society. Following his statement in "Patria Mia V" (October 3, 1912), that the intellectual awakening of society "will have its effect not only in the arts, but in life, in politics, and in economics", Pound ventures to address the diseases of modern American letters, "dry rot magazitis, school of virility or red blood, gorgeous school (Kipling, Swinburne), sociological verse (weak verse what has been said in better prose)"⁸³, and rekindle a debate between the artist and the rest of society. Pound writes, "We need the old feud between the artist and the smuggler portions of the community revived with some virulence for the welfare of things at large."⁸⁴ He announces his choice to discuss the arts as a means by which to address his wider social concerns in economics and politics and begins to articulate his ideas of the integral role of letters in life. "Letters are a nation's foreign office"⁸⁵, and Pound strives to make things new to propel the *Risorgimento*.

When Pound sets his mind to the task of understanding his young homeland, "almost a continent and hardly a nation,"⁸⁶ he attempts to present an image of America not only for English readers to understand that country, but also, and

⁸² Ezra Pound, "Approach to Paris III" *The New Age* XIII.21 (September 18, 1913) 607b-608a

⁸³ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia I" *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445b

⁸⁴ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *The New Age* XI.23 (October 2, 1912) 540a

⁸⁵ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia IV" *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516b

⁸⁶ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia I" *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445a

fundamentally, to define the American personality, to understand the masses, and to explore the place for art, the desired future audience of Pound's work, for Pound himself as much as for readers.

However, Pound's renegade tone affords him no appreciation or enduring connections to his homeland. As he undertakes his critique of America, his mantle, which he donned at *The New Age* as literary critic, expands to one of 'the critic at large.' He now stands as if in a pulpit, offering a sermon that says it promises a Risorgimento while undermining his own message by stating precisely why that awakening will not happen. His critique becomes inextricably mixed with his biting insults, ensuring his alienation with a determined repulsion that often overshadows his more clearly articulated cultural and literary critique.

The America that Pound sees is populated by a mongrel race resulting from the influx of foreigners who have come to improve their material condition. Pound writes with respect of the efforts of these American masses, these mongrel people, often citing their workmanship and approaches to educating their young as honorable, but he is convinced that from these people, free individuals cannot rise. They arrive en masse and become the melting pot masses. In Pound's mind, when he was writing "Patria Mia" in *The New Age*, these masses were defining the 'American type.' Humphrey Carpenter summarises Pound's belief that 'all-American stock' "rarely breeds what is popularly supposed to be the 'American type': the go-getter determined to improve his material condition." According to Pound, such a seeker after riches is more likely to be of recent American descent. What he calls 'the more deeply rooted population', the Anglo-Saxon colonial Americans from which he himself sprang, seems to him unlikely to give birth to that species. Rather, he said, 'it produces now and again an individual.'⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 7

There is in America, according to Pound, an individual enthusiasm that will help propel the renaissance. For this cultural Risorgimento to occur, Pound demanded strong individual personalities who were aimed at some notion of truth beyond the demands of the marketplace for art, thought or writing. "If one is going to print opinions that the public already agrees with, what is the use of printing 'em at all? Good art can't possibly be palatable all at once,"⁸⁸ he professes to Harriet Monroe in a 1912 letter that establishes his self-image as an artist in pursuit of the master-work without regard for "publicity and the praise of reviewers." In this letter, Pound announces his ambitious mission in poetry ("If a man write six good lines he is immortal—isn't that worth trying for?") and criticism ("Isn't it worth while having *one* critic left who won't say a thing is good until he is ready to stake his whole position on the decision?") to show how fully committed he was to raising the standard of arts in America. This letter serves as a great testament to the ambitions of the author of "Patria Mia", and is an intimate prose pronouncement of his lines, "Listen to me, attend me! / And I will breathe into thee a soul, / And thou shalt live for ever."⁸⁹

Pound expresses a recurrent concern throughout these articles in *The New Age* that the public is continually being asked to accept mediocre standards in art and culture. His restless and revolutionary intelligence contends instead that aesthetic and cultural values are always open to revision and change; cultural norms that may have been established for "good" poetry in the 1890's are not necessarily the standards that should be maintained for the contemporary poet. These standards must and do change and Pound accuses the education system and print magazines of dishonest representation:

⁸⁸ Ezra Pound, to Harriet Monroe (October 22, 1912) *Selected Letters 1907-1941*, ed. D.D. Paige, 12

⁸⁹ Ezra Pound, "NY" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations*. (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 234

Until someone is honest we get nothing clear. The good work is obscured, hidden in the bad. I go about this London hunting for the real. I find paper after paper, person after person, mildly affirming the opinion of someone who hasn't cared enough about the art to tell what he actually believes."⁹⁰

But not all people, not all individuals can be trusted to think for themselves. "You may have wondered, as I have wondered, at the stupidities of the race."⁹¹

Pound addresses two sorts of public stupidity in "Patria Mia", two obstacles to the enlightenment of the masses. He calls them 'refined stupidity' and 'brute stupidity'. Both forms of stupidity as Pound sees them can be remedied by instruction through 'right' education and brought towards an enlightenment, an awakening, a Risorgimento. Pound discusses these ideas of refined stupidity and brute stupidity in "Patria Mia". In his tale, a successful American is left alone in a room of high society ladies: "The 'successful' American [...] looks at the civilized peoples of the world and bets he can lift the piano. And they seem to find the matter irrelevant, being imbedded in their own particular and more effete sorts of stupidity."⁹² For Pound's agenda, the public requires guidance, there must be instructors, and in this regard, Pound is, as always, prepared to play schoolmaster. Pound does express what he believes and is certainly not short of opinions; however, he struggles with obtaining an audience that will hear him.

The complicated relationship the exiled Pound has with 'the public' is central to his perceived role as light and lamp of humankind. In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" in *The New Age*, Pound shows that the public can be interested in the arts, and that the creators and curators, indeed Pound himself, must carefully consider how this is to be done: "The drudgery and minutiae of method concern only the scholar. But when it comes to presenting matter to the public, to the intelligent, over-

⁹⁰ Ezra Pound, "The Pleasing Art of Poetry" *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 229b

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia III" *The New Age* XI.21 (September 19, 1912) 491b

busy public, *bonae voluntatis*, there are certain forms of civility, consideration, and efficiency to be considered.”⁹³

For Pound, provincialism, that ignorance of the manners, customs and nature of those outside one’s own purview, and the lust for uniformity that results, is the great tyranny to which he pins many failures. Provincialism is a small-minded isolationist mentality that, for Pound, quashes the individual and works against a common language of internationalism “against the hundred subtle forms of personal oppressions and coercions.”⁹⁴

Pound sees the impending Risorgimento as a series of liberations, “liberations from ideas, from stupidities, from conditions and from tyrannies of wealth or of arms.”⁹⁵ This fight against stupidity and liberation from cultural uniformity, is, as Pound sees it, central to the new enlightenment, the Risorgimento in American arts and letters: “In America our presumption is that those things are right which give the greatest freedom, the greatest opportunity for individual development to the individual, of whatever age or sex or condition.”⁹⁶ Noel Stock writes that Pound “saw knowledge of the world, of man’s soul, as part of a process of liberation.”⁹⁷ So for Pound, the ideas of freedom and liberty are the results of knowledge. However, given the poor dissemination of knowledge via a faulty education system, and the negative impact of magazines, the common man in any society will demonstrate downward intellectual mobility: “In another hundred years we may have a peasantry as stupid as any in Europe,”⁹⁸ thus necessitating Pound’s understanding of the public intelligence and his subsequent vigorous promotion of the best in arts and letters.

⁹³ Pound, Ezra. “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”, in William Cookson, *Selected Prose 1909-1965: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 22

⁹⁴ Ezra Pound, “Provincialism the Enemy I” *The New Age* XXI.11 (July 12, 1917) 244b

⁹⁵ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia V” *The New Age* XI.23 (October 2, 1912) 539b

⁹⁶ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia IX”, *The New Age* XI. 27 (October 31, 1913), 635b

⁹⁷ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1964) x.

⁹⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia X”, *The New Age* XII.1 (November 7, 1912) 12b

Throughout his life, but germinating in the pages of *The New Age*, Pound heartily believed that an earthly paradise could be built, “the Utopian society genuinely achieved, through the efforts of determined individuals.”⁹⁹ The main currents of Pound’s thought that have bearing on his own self-definition as an exile, social politics, and art can be seen in his argument for ‘humanity’, his discussion of the ‘individual,’ ‘liberty,’ and the move towards a Risorgimento.

Elsewhere Pound celebrates the American cultural commitment to liberty and autonomy; for Pound, the American type is an individual living in freedom. In this spirit he offers praise for the novelist Henry James by emphasizing “his propaganda, his continuing labour for individual freedom, his recurrent assaults upon cruelties and oppressions.”¹⁰⁰ For Pound, the challenges of communication between artist and audience and conversation between nations is central to James’ success, and the success of any ex-patriot who in exile can find objective understanding of the illnesses of nations:

Much of the real work of the world is done, and done almost solely by such quiet and persistent diagnoses as his are. This core of this work is not limited by America, yet no one has better understood the charm of all that is fine in American life, the uprightness, or, so to speak, the piles that are driven deep, and through the sort of floating bog of our national confusion.¹⁰¹

This confusion is what requires a leader to show the way to a Risorgimento. In these essays, the exile Ezra Pound was presenting the importance of this duty for himself and presenting himself for this duty.

It is widely acknowledged that Pound was a poet of masks, ‘personae’, and it is the name he gives two different collections of his poetry. Critics have addressed the “faceless” phenomenon of much of his work, especially his later poetry which seems to develop a voice of anonymity that Eric Ormsby has called the “abolition of

⁹⁹ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 25

¹⁰⁰ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VIII”. *The New Age* XI.26 (October 24, 1912), 611b

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

individual intonation.”¹⁰² This identity crisis in the poet is important to acknowledge as it can be argued that this migratory identity exists as a reality for Pound the exile, rather than just Pound the poet, in the years of the Great War. As his masks and use of personae in his poetry afford him to be a vessel for the incorporation of the past, the state of exile endorses a unique critical objectivity. This objectivity makes Pound an apparently ‘neutral’ voice, unbound by any shallow nationalism. Pound exploits this voice in the name of freedom and for a culture that supports and nurtures the individual.

Noel Stock posits that, “the years 1911-1920 were for Pound the most important in his literary career. During this time he wrote most of his best literary prose, renewed the language of poetry, and himself crossed over from being an interesting minor poet in to the realm of major poetry.”¹⁰³ Leon Surette writes that, “(I)t was in those years the he reformed himself. He arrived in London as a late symbolist singer of the erotic sublime and left as an Imagist satirist of the modern world.”¹⁰⁴ This redefinition of Pound’s identity, chiefly as witnessed in his writings in *The New Age*, is essential to our understanding of the importance of exile as a physical embodiment of the artistic doctrine of *ars vastrix* “which considered the artist a person set apart, an ‘unacknowledged legislator’ who saw clearly where others were muddled, blind, or hypocritical.”¹⁰⁵ In this decade Pound was determined to act as the poet shaman and be the one who saw clearly, showing others the way.

Pound began several important campaigns during the years of 1913-1919, in which he was to reinvent his image as a key arbiter of aesthetic and cultural values. From his tireless promotion of figures like William Carlos Williams, James Joyce,

¹⁰² Eric Ormsby, “The Voice Impersonator” *New Criterion* (March 1, 2004)

¹⁰³ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1964) 94

¹⁰⁴ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* (University of Illinois Press, Chicago: 1999) 21

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 15

Jacob Epstein, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, through his propagandising of Imagisme, to his development of Vorticism and his composition of 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' and the beginning of the Cantos, in his position on the payroll of *The New Age* and foreign editor for the American journal *Poetry*, Pound had become a political power in the world of poetry. The years before the war were remarkable years in the advancement of his position on the London literary scene. He had the ear of Yeats, who was heeding the artistic advice of the younger Pound. He had created Imagisme, a new movement in English poetry, with the help of other expatriates. He was getting his friends, like William Carlos Williams, published. He nurtured Robert Frost, Pound's elder by eleven years, upon his arrival in London. He helped find money and publishers for James Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. While war in Albania and the Balkans were in the headlines, Pound kept himself substantially occupied as the foreign editor of *Poetry*, never addressing the events in Europe and choosing to focus on his literary mission at hand instead. He became the literary editor of Harriet Shaw Weaver's *New Freewoman*, later changing its name to the *Egoist*, he contributed his second overtly literary series to *The New Age*, "The Approach to Paris"(1913), and over a short period of time, the appearance of political commentary and observations informed by extra-literary affairs can be observed in his contributions to *The New Age*.

As early as 1913, when "Through Alien Eyes" appeared in *The New Age*, Pound, "who had been courteously received" by England, was already making charges against her and thus alienating his host nation. He attacks the British sense of property, the "asinine" system for educating the poor, and the state of literary London. But for Pound, these faults create his opportunities; London is where he must be to advance his cause because the city is, "like Rome of the decadence, so far, at least, as letters are concerned. She is a main and vortex drawing strength from the

peripheries.” He continues, explaining the exile’s need to be in such a centre: “the finest authors, in my judgment—Yeats, James, Hudson, and Conrad—are all foreigners and among the prominent English writers vigour of thought, as in the cases of Wells and Bennett, is found only in conjunction with a consummate vulgarity.”¹⁰⁶ As a foreigner concerned with the realm of arts and letters, the devastating events in the trenches and seas of Europe could not remain extraneous to Pound’s purview for long.

Before 1914, Pound had been addressing social issues through discussions of art. By 1915 the futility of such a position was apparent. If a continent, indeed a world, could be so brutally thrust into combat while taking the lives of so many young men, what power could art have against such horrors? Nowhere in Pound’s writing is this crisis more pronounced than in his contributions to *The New Age*. And while nations murdered nations on the fields of Europe, Pound’s position as American in exile, both before and after his country joined the allied cause, provides him with both the tower from which to bear witness and the pedestal from which to pass judgments; he is the exiled American perched “on the rotten shell of a crumbling empire.”¹⁰⁷ His wartime pieces, “American Chaos”(September 1915), “This Super Neutrality”(October 1915), “Provincialism the Enemy”(July-August 1917), and “What America has to Live down”(August-September 1918) display the crisis of character with which Pound struggles as he works to remain a patriotic and optimistic American living in exile while continuing his ongoing struggle to remain the *avant-garde* of the American renaissance in art and letters.

Pound is found to retain a naïve perspective of the war from the outset. He continues his demands for subsidies for artists and the pursuit of an enlightened utopia. Of course, with the 3.5million lives lost in 1914 alone, it was not going to be

¹⁰⁶ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes III” *The New Age* XII.13 (January 30, 1913) 300b

¹⁰⁷ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes I” *The New Age* XII.11(January 16, 1913) 252a

easy to earn sympathy for the struggling artist. When he collaborated with Lewis and the Vorticists on the two issues of *BLAST*, it seems as though until Gaudier died, until he had a personal relationship with the conflict in Western and Eastern Europe, Pound did not fully comprehend the scale or horror of the war. There is no question that:

English literature in 1915 was in a sad state, but if Pound failed to become an arbiter of opinion it was not entirely because London was too stolid to appreciate his brilliance[...] but partly at least because of something in his own character—a lack of prudence and humility—which threw up a barrier between him and his objective.¹⁰⁸

Less than one month after America officially declares itself ‘neutral’ in the war, Pound publishes “American Chaos” in *The New Age*. One of the chief objectives of these essays is to discover why America is “not at this moment England’s ally in war.”¹⁰⁹ He asks, “Can we say that [this war is] a war between two ideas of the State: that is to say, Germany believes in the State and individuals be damned, and ‘the Allies’ believe that the individual has certain inalienable rights which it is the duty of the State to preserve him?”¹¹⁰ Pound sets up this question to suggest that America is already ideologically allied with England, but that they remain separate. He inquires how it is that nations become acquainted, citing the ignoble press, commerce, personal contacts, and contacts through literature and the arts, concluding that all but literary impressions fail in acquainting nations:

Ultimately, the impression of national character or national honesty is a *literary* impression. If we find a body of writers in any country setting down their beliefs and impressions in clear words that conform to fact as we know it or find it, we begin, without fuss of ebullition, to have a quiet amity or respect for that nation.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1964) ix

¹⁰⁹ Ezra Pound, “American Chaos I” *The New Age* XVII.19 (September 9, 1915) 449a

¹¹⁰ Ezra Pound, “American Chaos II” *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471a

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 471b

Therefore, for Pound, the tendency in English and American writing to evade honest representation of fact hinders any reciprocally fruitful relationship between nations. So for Pound, literature becomes the proving ground of cultural value; America's neutrality is justified by a literary failure. Pound finds the "better magazines" to blame for stifling American thought:

Until there is an exact correspondence between what the man says to his friend in private and what he writes in his book or his paper *there is no literature*, and there is not firm basis for alien friendship and acquaintance.¹¹²

While the effect is to prepare readers for facts and honest representation that the author himself will supply in due course, he remains very self-interested in his pursuit for a continued role for the artist in the face of this war. The serious artist wants only "liberty to do his work and little beyond this."¹¹³ This is a difficult time for Pound as he must address where his loyalties lie as an American in exile in London while working to keep himself relevant as a poet and literary critic.

His next essay in *The New Age*, "This Super-Neutrality"(October 21, 1915), appears only weeks later and adopts a much more assertive tone, attacking the official American position and President Woodrow Wilson. Further alienating his homeland, his fellow Americans, and liberal minds of the time, in his increasingly loosely defined role as literary critic for *The New Age* Pound contributes offensive racist rhetoric while criticizing the American President at a time of World War. Pound examines the kind of involvement America has in the war and encourages more involvement with calls to humanity, as Pound sees a tyranny of the modern world in the militarism of Germany, in Bulgaria, and in the massacres of Armenians. Many of Pound's assertions echo those of his earlier essays for *The New Age*, but he also offers strange, if horrible, endorsements of slavery and genocide. He writes that the Northern States had no right to abolish slavery in the Southern States. He

¹¹² Ezra Pound, "American Chaos II" *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471b

¹¹³ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VII" *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912), 588a

surmises that it is a positive thing that slavery was abolished as this prevention of oppression honours the ideals of the founding fathers “even though it is unlikely that any majority of the founders ever thought of applying their ideals to the negro.”¹¹⁴

Pound also cites the Armenian massacres as a tyranny in the modern world, but proceeds to offer a few slanderous statements suggesting that Armenians are a detestable and untrustworthy people. He states that the “immolation of Armenians is very good for the rest of the race.” Pound, from the safety of his literary critic lectern does not hesitate to expand his mandate, pontificating that he “could do without all the inhabitants of Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, the Balkans, and the Near East in general. I am firmly convinced that the slaughter of one or two dozen carefully selected inhabitants of this city would be of advantage to the race at large.” How strange and inhumane all of this appears in an article that attempts to make appeals to humanity in the face(s) of tyranny. But Pound wipes his hands clean of the offensive and potentially painful statements quoted above with this short paragraph which follows in the piece, writing, “the general principal that murder is not good for the race more than outweighs the theoretical or hypothetical advantage of the above-mentioned slaughter.”¹¹⁵

Beyond these written expressions of hateful racism in *The New Age*, Pound does repeat some of the more honourable and humane sentiments he had expressed in earlier articles in *The New Age*. He calls for vitality, urges against oppression, and encourages the building-up of an American ideal. There are no new illnesses, as such, no new complaints made about the shortcomings of America, only new victims of his attacks. But when taken in the context of Pound’s life and later position urging America to stay out of World War Two, his attacks upon President Wilson and the

¹¹⁴ Ezra Pound, “This Super-Neutrality” *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21, 1915) 595a

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

rhetoric of 'America First' expose an interesting and contradictory change of position for the exiled Pound.

Pound accuses Wilson of being "a low type of human being" and criticizes the wail of 'America First' for being "American First, at the expense of the rest of humanity."¹¹⁶ Later in the war, Pound writes in *The New Age*, "America must not only speak, she must listen. The whole of wisdom is not in one country alone."¹¹⁷ As discussed, he sees tyrannies in Germany, Bulgaria, and in the Armenian massacre, but also in "German State-education, press campaigns, subsidized professors, etc."¹¹⁸ Pound's reluctance to abandon his idealistic artistic concerns, his inability to see beyond his own self-interest and his indifference to life in the trenches make these essays unpalatable to many readers, but many of his observations about aesthetics have wider social implications. He is cautious that the war could be infringing on the freedom of presentation and the ability for the journalist and the artist to maintain the right to honest presentation, a concern that echoes his words from "Patria Mia" in *The New Age*: "It is very likely true that we do not escape from tyrannies, but only from a more obvious tyranny in to a tyranny of subtler form."¹¹⁹ According to his interpretation, the new task that the war demanded of him was to diagnose the diseases of civilization and he was eager to oblige while focusing on literary and personal concerns.

Pound uses the word 'tyranny' to describe the authority over the consciousness of the masses that he believes the institutions of journalism and education possess, most notably in the series "Provincialism The Enemy." This concern exhibits a hostility very likely with him since his days as both a student at the University of Pennsylvania and as a one-man Romance languages department at

¹¹⁶ Ezra Pound, "This Super-Neutrality" *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21, 1915) 595a

¹¹⁷ Ezra Pound, "What America Has to Live Down" *The New Age* XXIII.20 (September 12, 1918) 315a

¹¹⁸ Ezra Pound "This Super-Neutrality" *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21, 1915) 595b

¹¹⁹ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VI" *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564a

Wabash College. Pound writes that education in America and Germany is tyranny, evil, a perversion “because it holds up an ideal of ‘scholarship’, not an ideal of humanity.” The intelligent have their minds switched onto some “problem *unconnected* with life, unconnected with main principles.” An education system that educates until one is an ‘authority’ on some topic angers Pound. He sees this system as one that sacrifices the mind and vitality of the individual and builds a useless pyramid of knowledge for knowledge sake, with the idea that “man is the slave of the state”, “a piece of the machine.”¹²⁰ Pound sees villainy in the propagation of information via magazines and the education system and becomes very concerned with identifying the tyrannies impeding the utopic renaissance he seeks. In what Humphrey Carpenter calls a typically American belief, Pound maintains, “that the earthly paradise could really be built, the Utopian society genuinely achieved, through the efforts of determined individuals.”¹²¹ Pound was dedicated to such determination.

When Pound writes in *Poetry*, 1917, “Things to be Done,” he states, “we must try to think, at least a little, about civilization”¹²² as when a “civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects.”¹²³ The importance of a mutually supportive political and artistic society was a central focus in Pound’s contributions to *The New Age* until he could address both social and literary concerns simultaneously, a problem he was eventually to resolve in poetry. This resolution is the focus of Chapters Five and Six of this dissertation where the movement and struggle of Pound’s translation poetry that appears in *The New Age* is observed as the poetic attempt to come to terms with the

¹²⁰ Ezra Pound, “Provincialism the Enemy I” *The New Age* XXI.11 (July 12, 1917) 245a-b

¹²¹ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 25

¹²² Pound in Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* 284

¹²³ Ezra Pound, “The Renaissance” (October, 1914) in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. T.S. Eliot, ed. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London: 1954) 225

world outside the poem. He would have to focus on his passions, the art of poetry and the impending artistic awakening:

The arts come into prominence and there is what is called an 'age of art' when men of a certain catholicity of intelligence come in to power. The great protector of the arts is rare as the great artist, or more so.¹²⁴

By accepting Leon Surette's assessment that in 1915, the dominant ideology in the English-speaking world "was the matrix of democratic liberalism, post-christian utilitarian morality, and free enterprise economics"¹²⁵ we can better understand the increase in confidence in Pound's strident voice. The war disrupted this dominant ideology matrix. Pound had been trying to do the same by kicking against moralist literary criticism, ridiculing the failings of democracy and, to a certain extent, capitalism, refusing to allow prose and poetry to be treated as commodities to be judged according to notions of market value rather than intrinsic artistic worth. But much more than permanently scarring him, as Surette suggests, this war *convinced* him that he was right: "You many lead a fool to perfection, but you cannot make him regard it."¹²⁶

In "Patria Mia", Pound makes a series of distinctions between the 'materialist' and the 'idealist' individual instincts. The former instinct is personified for him by the man who has a belief in his own future and a commitment to the bourgeois ideal of material self-improvement and the desire "to be better off". The latter is more of a sentimentalist, a man that has 'the finer feelings,' and knows the "marrow of life." In both cases, these people know what they want and the differences come in determining "how to get it." This difference, for Pound, is a distinction of two types of logic, a distinction between the 'mechanistic' and the 'naturalistic'. Pound writes that an individual is not free if his logic is mechanized, if

¹²⁴ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies I" *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

¹²⁵ Leon Surette *Pound in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 14

¹²⁶ Ezra Pound, "Approach to Paris II" *New Age* XIII.20 (Sept 11, 1913) 578b

he is incapable of receiving ideas. It thus becomes quite clear which presentation of mentality Pound models after his perception of his own mentality, and naturally, which one he prefers: "It is possible that 'Individuals' cannot be produced except in old countries or from old stock. I am not sure of this. But this at least is true, that a man's mind must be hand-made and not machine-made if one is to take interest in it."¹²⁷ So for Pound, the obstacles in place were the conditions of modernity itself and the war, rather than immediately shaking up this notion, only made it seem more likely to be true.

For Pound as poet and thinker, the dissemination of information was central to his concerns. He knew that involvement in the editing and selecting of works to be published in magazines, especially in America, could help him have the influence he needed. With his role as critic/editor he could help direct the way to the *Risorgimento*. Pound targets the education system and magazines as two entities guilty of the mechanization of logic or "tyranny" of education of the masses. For Pound, this 'dumbing down' is the provincialism he detests, a provincialism that crushes the individual and dictates uniformity. For Pound, magazines were the media of education for the mature, socially aware, and forward-looking citizen, and he was concerned that their content was sacrificed for profit.

Pound sees himself on a mission in pursuit of the best in art, and in particular, poetry. For Pound this art must stem from someone honest, someone who "can put down exactly what you say and mean."¹²⁸ For the *Risorgimento* to occur, as Pound repeatedly insists, strong individual personalities are needed. For Pound, these are personalities aimed at some notion of truth, true representation or true feeling, beyond the demands of the marketplace for art, thought or writing: "Until someone is honest we get nothing clear. The good work is obscured, hidden in the bad. I go

¹²⁷ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VII" *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588a

¹²⁸ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *The New Age* XI.23 (October 2, 1912) 539b

about this London hunting for the real. I find paper after paper, person after person, mildly affirming the opinion of someone who hasn't cared enough about the art to tell what he actually believes."¹²⁹ Pound is determined to offer a voice that transcends mere political ideological contingency.

While most readers will recognize a humanity and admirable enlightenment that informs his early prose defenses of individuality and his tirades against tyranny, few would wish to be the object of his unrelenting scrutiny. At his most passionate, his prose thrives on perceived conflicts and relishes the opportunity to identify the causes of tyrannies, as he sees them. He writes, "the drama of life depends upon inequalities."¹³⁰ Since before the war Pound's dissatisfaction had been driving him to point his disapproving finger at those who had rejected him. And while for millions, the decade lost its innocence in the war and found horror in the trenches, so did Pound lose friends in the conflict, and made many enemies in the English speaking world, thus necessitating his second exile, from London to Paris.

In The Futurist Moment, Marjorie Perloff describes the "brief utopian phase of early Modernism when artists felt themselves to be on the verges of a new age that would be more exciting, more promising, more inspiring than any preceding one."¹³¹ Pound had the conviction, even while many young men were dying on the fields of France, still to insist on money for the arts. He remained convinced that this sort of financial investment would help bring a great age for society. He writes in *Poetry*, "Great art does not depend upon comfort, it does not depend upon the support of riches. But a great age is brought about only with the aid of wealth,

¹²⁹ Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, October 22, 1912. Selected Letters: 1907-1941 (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 12

¹³⁰ Ezra Pound, "Through Alien Eyes", *The New Age* XII.12 (January 23, 1913), 276a

¹³¹ Marjorie Perloff, The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture. (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986) 36

because a great age means the deliberate fostering of genius, the gathering-in and grouping and encouragement of artists.”¹³²

Proximity to what Wyndham Lewis called “the Wolves, the Whaleys, and the Stracheys,” the Bloomsbury Group, brought Pound intimate experience of cultural ostracism and kept the exile fixed firmly on the outskirts of fashionable literary circles. This only fed his hostility towards such groups, but if groups were what was needed to advance his literary cause, Pound would form organizations of his own. And he did, following his announcement of “imagist”(imagiste) poetry in the introduction to five of T.E. Hulme’s poems appended to *Ripostes*(1912) and with the promotion of Henri-Gaudier-Brzeska and Vorticist sculpture, painting, and writing. Ever isolated, Pound lost both of these artists and friends to the war and such losses were not easy from which to recover. It was a war that took many lives and it was a war that changed many more. For Pound, the war created circumstances that demanded that he formally meld his political and economic observations with his aesthetic ones.

The affirmation of his convictions about the tyrannies surrounding him, soldier deaths in his circle of artists including both Gaudier-Brzeska and Hulme engendered an anger that would become a part of Pound’s post-war work in *The New Age*. Once the vortex, London became a hell from which to escape, as Pound eventually did for Paris in 1921. In the terms of Lewis, they lived as a “fury of intelligence baffled and shut in by circumjacent stupidity.”¹³³ In this way, the evolution of Ezra Pound’s political voice witnessed in his wartime essays in *The New Age* coincides with his relentless insistence on the importance of art in an age of

¹³² Ezra Pound, “The Renaissance” (October, 1914) in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 221

¹³³ Wyndham Lewis in J.J. Wilhelm, *Ezra Pound in London and Paris(1908-1925)* (London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990) 145

world war, a war that stole his companions and collaborators. His second exile thus becomes one of literary and artistic necessity.

CHAPTER 3

The Economics of Exile: Part 1

THE AIM of a sane and decent economic system is to fix things so that decent people can eat, have clothes and houses up to the limit of available goods.

-Ezra Pound, "What is Money for?" (1939)

Between 1908 and 1920, Ezra Pound worked to set off a cultural revolution, a renaissance, a *Risorgimento* in arts and letters, that he hoped would effect great change in mass society. With the destruction brought on by The Great War and the deaths of artist Henri Gaudier-Brzeska¹³⁴ and poet-philosopher T.E. Hulme on the battlefield, events that Pound felt had virtually destroyed English civilization, he effectively called off his revolutionary mission. Instead, as he would recall years later, he "began investigation of causes of war, to oppose same."¹³⁵

In many ways, this new pursuit was a continuation of Pound's early calls for the freedom of the individual against intellectual oppression and cultural commodification, liberation "from ideas, from stupidities, from conditions, and from tyrannies of wealth or of arms."¹³⁶ But the focus of these ideas underwent a fundamental shift between 1913 and 1920. He had been calling for an end to "the hundred subtle forms of personal oppressions and coercions,"¹³⁷ by the conservation of intellectual human resources before material ones as a part of a renaissance in arts and letters. Economic concerns had been a background presence in the aesthetic

¹³⁴ For Pound, the death of Gaudier-Brzeska was "the greatest individual loss which the Arts have sustained in war," a sentiment expressed in Cantos 16 and 71, and also in Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir

¹³⁵ Ezra Pound. Selected Poems of Ezra Pound (New York, New Directions: 1956) viii

¹³⁶ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *New Age*, XI.23 (October 3, 1912) 539b

¹³⁷ Ezra Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy I" *The New Age* XXI.11 (July 12, 1917) 244b

discourses of Pound's early writings on masterworks, virtue and the donative quality of artistic expression in The Spirit of Romance and "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", but by 1918, the economic theme had made a clear move to the fore of Pound's thought. Looking at the emerging styles and themes between his first publication with the journal in 1911 and his final in 1926, this dissertation examines how Pound's economic proclamations in *The New Age* determined and developed a Poundian aesthetic that existed beyond the journal itself and into the era of creative output following his departure from London when Pound began to focus, almost exclusively, on The Cantos. This chapter focuses that examination on Pound's developing economic involvements as expressed in *The New Age*.

Pound tells us that America writes for profit before art, and has therefore reversed the adage that a nation writes good poetry before it writes good prose: "Poetry is, in letters, the earlier form; a nation writes good poetry before it begins to write good prose. We seem to reverse this. [...] Wherever there is an immediate ratio between action and profit the American will at once develop his faculties."¹³⁸ Pound afforded a career as a poet, in part, by earning a wage through prose, and his published poetry works at least a few years behind his prose proclamations. He writes in "Commission" (Lustra, 1916):

Go, my songs, to the lonely and the unsatisfied,
Go, also to the nerve-racked, go to the enslaved-by-
convention,
Bear to them my contempt for their oppressors.
Go as a wave of cool water,
Bear my contempt of oppressors.

Speak against unconscious oppression,
Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative,
Speak against bonds.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Ezra Pound "Patria Mia IV" *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516a

¹³⁹ Ezra Pound, "Commission" Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 268

This poem captures the essence of the decade for Pound as a working artist. Much of what this poem says in verse, Pound's essays in *The New Age* express in prose. His dedication to the "lonely and the unsatisfied," reflects his own position as exile and echoes his emotions of dissatisfaction. His "contempt of oppressors" is detected in much of his prose in *The New Age*, notably in "Provincialism The Enemy"(1917) where his critique focuses on "ignorance plus a lust after uniformity."¹⁴⁰ He praises Confucius for his "emphasis on conduct," for his constant emphasis "on the value of personality, on the outlines of personality, on the man's right to preserve the outlines of his personality, and of his duty not to interfere with personalities of others,"¹⁴¹ and Henry James for "his constant propaganda against personal tyranny, against the hundred subtle forms of personal oppressions and coercions."¹⁴² The perceived tyrannies and oppressions are constant in Pound's thought, and *The New Age* writings testify to these concerns. Pound saw degradation of culture everywhere and was determined not only to preserve what was great in art, but simultaneously to shake-off conventions and instigate a Risorgimento in American arts and letters. These ambitions were to place Pound at the centre of a perceived battlefield in a war for civilization. It is natural that these truly epic subjects became epic struggles and took the final shape of epic poetry, but it is in the pages of *The New Age* that Pound first engages the literary, artistic, social and economic crises of culture.

There has been no full-length study that investigates *The New Age* writings as carefully as is necessary to understand the critical importance of this journal in Pound's literary output. *The New Age* has been seen as the spawning ground for the development of his more radical ideas, both socioeconomic and literary. In his study of Pound's radical economics in Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to

¹⁴⁰ Ezra Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy I" *The New Age* XXI.11 (July 12, 1917) 244b

¹⁴¹ Ezra Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy II" *The New Age* XXI.12 (July 19, 1917) 268a

¹⁴² Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy I", 244b

Anti-Semitism(1999), Leon Surette sees *The New Age* as an early spawning ground for Pound's later political affiliations in the company of Orage and Douglas. Tim Redman, in his Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism(1991) sees Pound's relationship to *The New Age* as the starting point of his move to fascism. Pound's gradual political education, Redman writes, at the hands of Orage and *The New Age* circle, also provided him with his economic education, "though devotion to art was still his paramount concern."¹⁴³ While many of the connections between Pound's early pronouncements and later thought have been drawn in the work of these and other critics, no single evaluation of Pound's *New Age* concerns has been thoroughly undertaken. Such a study could strengthen our understanding of the integration between social and aesthetic concerns in Pound's worldview as he develops them.

While many critics have seen C.H. Douglas' Economic Democracy as the beginning of Pound's economic interests, his writings in *The New Age* between 1911-1920 cannot be overlooked if we are to accept the popular critical perception of a monumental shift in the trajectory of Pound's thought upon encountering Douglas. As has been discussed in previous chapters, *The New Age* was a very particular and a very unique journal, and for Pound it held a very special position. *The New Age* was a publication that was not primarily a literary journal but much more of a political one, and Pound was free to include social and political commentaries in his contributions. Additionally, he was exposed to individuals intimately involved in varied political and economic movements through the offices of A.R. Orage.

Pound's critics have viewed the political thrust of his early critique in varied ways. Generally, it can be said that these interpretations find themselves between two extremes: (1) Pound as a voice of the democratic individual's resistance to

¹⁴³ Tim Redman, "Pound's Politics and Economics" The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound Ira Nadel, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 252

tyrannies and oppressions, to what Cary Wolfe has called “modernity’s imperial impositions of system and structure”¹⁴⁴ and, (2) self-serving promoter of the poet as seer, the ‘antennae of the race’, an elitist objection to the order of things as a disenfranchised artist. A difficulty in studying Pound is such that upon investigation of his life and work, both perspectives can seem simultaneously justified although contradictory. For example, in spite of the facts of his support of, and sacrifices made for, the promotion of fellow artists (W.B. Yeats, H.D., James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, etc.), we can still reasonably question his motivation upon learning that his gift of marble to impoverished sculptor Gaudier-Brzeska came with a condition that it be used to create a bust of Pound himself.

Another example is to be found two decades later. Pound, the patriotic American, did spend the Second World War in Italy. He broadcast terribly offensive sentiments over Rome Radio. However it should be noted that upon hearing that the United States had entered the war, Pound rushed from Rome to Rapallo, “sold everything, and planned to leave with the other Americans aboard the last train to Lisbon [but] the American consul refused to allow him on the train.” This exclusion demands at least a consideration towards a more sympathetic reading of certain aspects of Pound’s biography. Further, knowledge of this biographical fact encourages an approach that reads the broadcasts, and perhaps even their messages, in a different light: “Denied the right of refuge, Pound was trapped. Faced with financial ruin, he continued his radio program.”¹⁴⁵ With either view of Pound’s political thrust comes a portrait of an artist personally, passionately, and often

¹⁴⁴ Cary Wolfe, *The Limits of American Literary Ideology in Pound and Emerson* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 27. “Having long enthused for things medieval, he was now determined to emerge into a feeling of contemporaneity, accompanied by a rebirth of his artistic powers. Typically, while so preoccupied, he decided not to reform just himself but the whole of America.”

¹⁴⁵ James Dale Davidson, “Ezra Pound, RIP” *The Libertarian Forum* IV.10 (December, 1972) 5a

violently, engaged with perceived tyrannies and oppressions that force individuals, and more importantly, the artist, into a state of exile.

It may be reasonable to understand the emergence of an economic theme in Pound's concerns as one motivated by personal interest, at least initially. Just as Pound's journey from medieval Troubadour poet to one that embraces and engages with modernity can be read as "externalizing his own situation,"¹⁴⁶ we can begin to examine his economic concerns as highly personalised and another aspect of his sense of isolation: "One looks out on a plutocracy and upon the remains of an aristocracy who ought to know by this time that keeping up the arts means keeping up living artists."¹⁴⁷ Isolated when not 'kept up' through the help of patronage, but once supported, voluntarily occupying the exile stance, the artist is permanently alienated as if from an ivory tower from where "one looks out."

For Noel Stock, to approach any broad conclusion we must study Pound's work in detail, taking account of Ezra Pound the man only when he interferes with Ezra Pound the poet and critic¹⁴⁸. This approach presents a problem of method in that by its own set parameters of inquiry, the contemporary critic's ability to approach even narrow conclusions is limited; one cannot understand the poet and critic *without* the man. Most importantly, however, the position is inconsistent with Pound's own 'luminous' world vision. While it is true that it is important to judge his ideas independently from his life or character, in our continuing struggle to understand the complexities of Ezra Pound, the poet of 'the tale of the tribe', aspects of his life and character can only enrich our political portraits of Pound. And even before critical theory or consideration of his own ideologies, Pound has pointed us to biography throughout his work, demanding that we consider these aspects of his life

¹⁴⁶ Humphrey Carpenter, A Serious Character: Ezra Pound. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 184

¹⁴⁷ Ezra Pound, "Affirmations III: Jacob Epstein" *The New Age* XVI.12 (January 21, 1915) 312b

¹⁴⁸ Noel Stock, Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1964) x

in understanding his own pronouncements. Pound refers to his heritage and family history in his prose and verse and these factors have great relevance to Pound's social and economic outlook. Therefore, these aspects of biography¹⁴⁹ demand our attention first.

Unlike Ezra Pound, who can be characterized as a rebel, a misfit, a self-exile and a revolutionary artist, his forefathers represented the American establishment. He wrote in his semi-fictional and impressionistic autobiography in *The New Age*, "Indiscretions"(1920), of this lineage, writing, "one could write the whole social history of the United States from one's family annals."¹⁵⁰ Pound's grandfather, Thaddeus Pound, had worked successfully in the lumber trade and later became politically involved. He was elected Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin in 1870 and by 1876 became a Republican Senator. He established the Chippewa Falls Northern & Eastern Railway Company where he used economic models that would appear in Pound's economic writing in the 1930s. To pay the workers, he printed his own scrip, which could be credited at the company store, and this currency also was used to raise company credit with the banks. But when a monopolist named Weyerhaeuser took over both the railway line and Thaddeus' timber company, fuel for Pound's fire was handed over in the case of an 'immigrant' taking over a 'native.'¹⁵¹ Economic stability was temporary in the face of such profit-driven outsiders. There was no security of status in society, and as Pound writes in "Indiscretions"(*The New Age*, May 27- Aug 12, 1920), Thaddeus entered "Congress a 'rich man,' he 'left it a poor one'" and "passed permanently from the national political limelight."¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 16-17. I am indebted to Humphrey Carpenter for the biographical information provided on Pound's family that follows.

¹⁵⁰ Ezra Pound, "Indiscretions; or Une Revue de Deux Mondes II" *The New Age* XXVII.5 (June 3, 1920) 76b

¹⁵¹ Pound refers to the monopolist in *The Cantos*, "the other type, Warenhauser", *Canto* 22. The monopolist also appears as another type in "The Revolt of Intelligence", serialized in *The New Age* 1919-20.

¹⁵² Ezra Pound, "Indiscretions III" *The New Age* XXVII.6 (June 10, 1920) 92b

Pound's Aunt Frank, who he calls his "aunt-in-law" and "Great Aunt" in "Indiscretions", was also a source of financial security and Pound honours her memory with gratitude. She took him to Europe for three months' travel in 1898 when he was twelve years old. He thanked her in a letter in 1912, writing "When I compare my advantage of training to those of people about me, it comes over me, how much I owe you for starting me globe-trotting at an early age."¹⁵³ This afforded Pound the luxury of familiarizing himself with 'old-world' culture and experiencing the artifacts, both physical and intellectual, of European history. "Without her I might not have been here," he writes from Venice years later, thanking her "purse and incentive."¹⁵⁴

At the turn of the 20th century, America was in an age of industrial acceleration, territorial expansion and mass immigration. The Pound family lived through many social and economic changes in America and Ezra never missed these facts. Born in Hailey, Idaho, in 1885, Pound was brought into the world literally on the frontier. A rich mining area, Idaho City had faced major mining strikes in the 1860s and spawned the state's first trade unions in 1867. The population of the territory doubled between 1870 and 1880, and nearly tripled between 1880 and 1890. Gold was discovered in a river to the north of Hailey and to the south, the Oregon trail led wagons west in pursuit of gold and opportunities. Idaho was only admitted to the union in 1890 by which time the Pound family had moved to a suburb of Philadelphia to escape "the immigrant takeover of urban life."¹⁵⁵

In terms of the economic biography of Ezra Pound, his father, Homer, has some bearing as well. Homer was quite literally working on the fringe of America, as a Registrar of Land Claims in Idaho, frontier country only just beginning to be

¹⁵³ Ezra Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 33

¹⁵⁴ Ezra Pound, "Indiscretions; or Une Revue de Deux Mondes I" *The New Age* XXVII.4 (May 27, 1920) 56a

¹⁵⁵ Carpenter, *A Serious Character*. 19

settled. He had received training in the assaying of precious metals, a necessary qualification for running the land claims office. He later took a job that he held for the rest of his life at the Assaying Office of the Mint. Again, Pound chooses to record some of these facts in “Indiscretions”, ending the series with accounts of visits to the Mint, noting his father’s skill in assaying the quality of precious metals, “any fool might do it,” to tell the real silver from the false, “just as an art critic looks at a picture and says, ‘No, not a Rembrandt,’ eh—eh; and, on consideration, not a Hals, either.”¹⁵⁶ For Pound, the act of assaying worth and value was something that he tried to emulate in his early research and critical prose and continued throughout his life to separate good poetry from the bad, pursuing an art “closer to the thing,” constantly “wringing lilies from the acorn”¹⁵⁷, the vital from the dead art. But Homer also played an intimate role in Pound’s personal economics. Between 1908 and at least 1920, Homer was frequently sending Ezra financial support.

This financial need becomes a very relevant factor in the importance of *The New Age* to Pound. Not only was Pound to find an encouraging outlet for ideas in its pages, but he was to find an input of pounds (sterling), with a consistent income for his contributions to *The New Age*. Moreover, this income from *The New Age* came with ‘no strings attached’ in that he neither had to conform to an editorial palate nor limit his output to a narrow discipline. This afforded Pound liberty by giving him the ability to remain independent, to think and to write as he pleased. In other words, this financial security and encouragement from Orage allowed Pound to keep his independence and remain isolated as an artistic exile.

While it could be argued that Ezra Pound’s early economic writings at times discuss topics that address universal generalities, and at others times make

¹⁵⁶ Ezra Pound, “Indiscretions; or Une Revue de Deux Mondes XII” *The New Age* XXVII.15 (August 12, 1920) 237a

¹⁵⁷ Ezra Pound, “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley”. *Selected Poems of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1957) 61

statements that are purely philosophical, his personal economic concerns were very practical and ever-present. As C. David Heymann writes, “Money, and such matters, could never have been far from the writer’s mind.”¹⁵⁸ It must be appreciated that Pound’s contributions to *The New Age*, famously nicknamed the “No Wage”, guaranteed an income. From Pound’s humble beginnings in Europe he was constantly struggling for money, in part for the advancement of his art. He wrote to his father from Venice in 1908 that he was running out of money. “I could, I trust, starve like a gentleman. Its (*sic*) listed as part of the poetic training, you know.”¹⁵⁹

Ezra’s father, Homer, who was on a limited income, sent his son money on a regular basis. Ezra needed it to survive, but he did begin to find ways to earn an income from varied corners: he offered literary classes to society ladies, earned a reasonable wage for his lectures on medieval poetry at the London Polytechnic, had a minor income from poetry publications, and he began to publish in journals at an increasing rate. What Humphrey Carpenter called Pound’s ‘mysterious’ income of £200 per annum has since been credited to Margaret Cravens, a woman Pound met in Paris under somewhat secretive circumstances. As he was courting Olivia Shakespear’s daughter, Dorothy, his engagements with Cravens were kept quite quiet. He met Cravens, a 30-year old American studying music and living a wealthy bohemian life in Paris, in March, 1910. Their “tragic friendship” ended when she committed suicide two years later, but in the interim, she became his patron and source of the bulk of his income. This patronage allowed Pound some liberty in exploring his own development and focusing on writing new poetry without needing to fall victim to the modern demands of capitalist exchange on the artist.

¹⁵⁸ C. David Heymann, *Ezra Pound: The Last Row* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976) 34

¹⁵⁹ Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 92.

Pound was increasingly furious at the social¹⁶⁰ and economic challenges that artists faced in the distribution of their work. Bringing a new and vital art, whether sculpture, music, architecture or literature, to the public was Pound's first practical challenge addressed in the pages of *The New Age*. The challenge, Pound quickly discovers, is, at root, economic. The fact that the artist must comply with commercial viability in the production of his or her work becomes his earliest economic concern. Meghnad Desai detects a correspondence between Pound's concerns here and the views of the younger Marx when he observes that:

The distance between artistic endeavour and filthy lucre is [...] unbridgeable. It is not that lump gold is better than gold coin or paper money that is at the centre of the argument. The genius produces lumps of gold—be they the *canzoni* of troubadours or the piece of marble sculpted into a cat by Gaudier-Brzeska. Exchanging his product for gold coin or paper notes does not value it in equivalents; it devalues it. It does that because once exchanged, the work is no longer unique; it has an equivalent expression. It has been translated in to its other. It has been alienated from the genius and handed over to the mere consumer.¹⁶¹

This anxiety of the artist inspired Pound's dedication in becoming a propagandist for other artists and for the ideas of patronage and subsidy. These ambitions were consistent with his wider mission for a renaissance in the arts. It will also be shown that this question of 'exchange' was to affect Pound's aesthetic and artistic development. We can see the relation of language and exchange in Pound from the courtly style of his early poetry, to the precision of Imagism, the energy of Vorticism, the 'exchange' of translation, to the development of his epic style. First, Pound's mission for the arts through patronage and subsidy must be examined.

After Cravens' death, *The New Age* would prove to be a real financial support for Pound. He wrote hundreds of articles, poems, and letters for the

¹⁶⁰ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia I" *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445b. "The contact between the artists and those with whom he must, in the disposal of his work, have contact is, however, so disgusting that I would rather leave it unmentioned."

¹⁶¹ Meghnad Desai, *The Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2006) 47

publication and it was in these years that Pound began most vocally to address his concerns regarding the relationship between art and modern capitalist society. Subsequently, it is in the pages of *The New Age* that we can witness Pound's development as a thinker on both artistic and social (political and economic) issues. Further, because his essay production was very high in these years, especially 1915-1920, we witness Pound at his most hurried, most volatile and fearlessly expressive, and, at times, most brilliant.

Between 1911-1912, Pound courted Dorothy Shakespear. As a result of her mother's connection to Yeats, he was brought into the network of many significant names from Yeats and H.G. Wells to T.E. Hulme to Ford Madox Hueffer and Wyndham Lewis, with patrons and publishers in between. As a person, Pound was vibrant and ambitious. As a poet, Lawrence Rainey writes in a 1993 article, Pound had become a living archaism. Poetically, he was a "modern troubadour", to borrow the oxymoronic phrase, who was not only creating poetry of a past era (canzoni, sestinas, etc.), but was living outside of the poetic marketplace writing poems as a troubadour poet for an elite group that did not exist; there was no royal court commissioning his songs, another archaism Pound would see restored in the *Risorgimento*. In this way, Pound was in opposition with the state of industrial capitalist society in 1910, a state that was increasingly employing the model of the working or commercially publishing poet.

Cravens' patronage amounted to £200 per year, but Pound kept the source secret in letters, even when needing it to convince the Shakespear family to let him propose marriage to their daughter, Dorothy. £200 was a significant wage, and two thirds of Cravens' total income via her trust arrangement.¹⁶² It was also a significant wage for any citizen, but especially a poet. Rainey tells us that in 1914, "the average

¹⁶² Omar Pound and Robert Spoo, ed. *Ezra Pound and Margaret Cravens: A tragic friendship, 1910-1912* (London: Duke University Press, 1988) 6

wage for the adult male industrial worker was about £75 per annum, whereas the average annual income of the salaried class was £340. The gap between these figures represented the divide between the working class and the whole of the rest of society.”¹⁶³ Pound was safely positioned above the working class line, but was always aware of its proximity.

A.R. Orage’s political platform for Guild Socialist, utilitarian and right-of-Liberal minds of the time, *The New Age*, paid Pound for his contributions. So, as Tim Redman points out in his study of Pound and Italian fascism, “like his later hero, Mussolini, Pound began his conversion to fascism through the pages of a socialist newspaper.”¹⁶⁴ While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to trace Pound’s “conversion” to fascism, *The New Age* contributions display the development of the poet’s increasing admiration for ideals that would lead him towards fascism, culminating in *The New Age* with his adoption of Douglas’ economics. These writings also suggest effects on Pound’s developing aesthetics, what Leon Surette has called Pound’s move from “late symbolist singer of the erotic sublime and [...] Imagist satirist of the modern world.”¹⁶⁵ An examination of these prose pieces will show that with the increasing presence of overtly economic pronouncements came a withdrawal of purely aesthetic ones.

His first series for the journal were discussions of aesthetics, with an editorial note explaining, “Mr. Pound will contribute expositions and translations in illustration of ‘The New Method’ in scholarship.” While Pound did continue to address primarily aesthetic artistic concerns, it was in Orage’s publication that Pound was able to exercise his political voice as well. He wrote extensively on various subjects and Orage paid well for a poet’s perspective: “Out of financial necessity [...]

¹⁶³ Lawrence Rainey, “The Creation of the Avant-Garde: F.T. Marinetti and Ezra Pound” *Modernism/Modernity* 1.3 (1994), 198

¹⁶⁴ Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 17

¹⁶⁵ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 21

Pound was forced to found his own writing factory, assembling and churning out articles, essays, reviews at a prodigious, machine-like rate. [...] Orage, for whose *New Age* he had actually been toiling since 1911, was his bread and butter.”¹⁶⁶ Pound published some 260 articles, poems, and letters in *The New Age*, as himself, and under pseudonyms B.H. Dias (visual arts critic) and William Atheling (music critic).

This new association with *The New Age* was well timed as in June 1912 his main patron, Margaret Cravens, committed suicide, and Pound’s income was cut by more than half. Although he lost half of his annual income, he remained extremely active as foreign correspondent for the American periodical, *Poetry*, promising Harriet Monroe “whatever is most dynamic in artistic thought, either here or in Paris,” with the authority of working as a poet in Europe, “I *do* see nearly everyone that matters.”¹⁶⁷ Pound also became much more involved in *The New Age*. The weekly provided a forum in which he could share his ideas. No longer limited to pieces about poetry or language, Pound could simultaneously write about politics, society, and economics in the hopes of sparking a great age of arts and letters in America. “I have declared my belief in an imminent American Risorgimento” that “will have its effect not only in the arts, but in life, in politics, and in economics.”¹⁶⁸

“Patria Mia” is Pound’s second contribution to *The New Age*, his first lengthy series about his homeland and his first piece that explores literature with considerations made for wider social contexts. Serialized in *The New Age* between September and November, 1912, “Patria Mia” exposes a sense of American cultural inferiority to Europe and addresses the flood of immigration to the United States that no doubt affected Pound personally, if not economically, in his youth. Parts of

¹⁶⁶ C. David Heymann, *Ezra Pound: The Last Rower* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976) 34

¹⁶⁷ Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, August 18, 1912. *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 10

¹⁶⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia V” *The New Age* XI.23 (October 3, 1912) 539a

“Patria Mia” will be examined more closely later in this chapter, but it is worth noting that in this early piece, Pound’s concerns for the health of society were bound to his arguments for the health of the arts.

Precisely where and when the economic interest emerged in Pound’s poetry continues to attract the attention of critics and biographers. Hugh Kenner has insisted that the idea of ‘money’ was not a mature development or late arrival in Pound’s canon of concerns, but rather that money “was there all along.”¹⁶⁹ After Douglas, money takes a central role in *The Cantos*. Kenner writes in *The Pound Era* that gold is a central presence from the very first revised *Canto I* in Hades with “the golden wand of Tiresias” and at the end of *Canto I* where “gold ornaments Aphrodite.”¹⁷⁰

Alan Judd, a biographer of Ford Madox Ford, has proposed that perhaps Pound first became interested in political, and thus economic affairs, through Ford. An article appeared in Ford’s *English Review* by Arthur Marwood that addressed the welfare of all citizens and Alan Judd suggests that it was this article “which might have influenced Pound in his unfortunate enthusiasm for economics.”¹⁷¹

Leon Surette acknowledges Pound’s fascism as well as his treason¹⁷² and works to discover what led the poet to these ends. Surette sees an understanding of Pound’s individual descent into the reprehensible realms of fascism and anti-Semitism as a means by which to come to a better understanding of how nations succumbed to such destructive and immoral ideologies. The war disrupted faith in liberal capitalism and instilled disgust in Pound, and many others, with the loss of life for a society that undervalued the individual, “for an old bitch gone in the teeth /

¹⁶⁹ Hugh Kenner in Ezra Pound, *Selected Prose: 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973)

¹⁷⁰ Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 411

¹⁷¹ Alan Judd, *Ford Madox Ford* (London: Harper Collins, 1990) 166, in Meghnad Desai, *The Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2006) 28

¹⁷² Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 66. “Pound certainly did remove his loyalties from the United States and gave them to Italy.”

for a botched civilization”¹⁷³ Pound expressed faith in a balance of power based on the arts but after discussions with Orage and Douglas in the offices of *The New Age*, Social Credit became the religion for that already-existing, but directionless faith. “It was the arrival of Douglas that changed everything” and Pound’s conviction that he was somehow a cofounder of the movement “contributed to his loyalty to it through thick and thin.”¹⁷⁴

Several critics share the view that specifically economic matters do not appear in Pound’s writing until after C.H. Douglas’ *Economic Democracy*. Peter Nicholls sees this moment as a major turning point. He acknowledges that while Pound had been interested in the place for art in modern society and had addressed the conflicts of class, it was not until reading Douglas that money became the central identifiable ‘enemy.’¹⁷⁵ Besides having a very practical centrality to Pound’s concerns (money, meals, proposals of marriage, etc.), to read *The New Age* writings is to see that money was a convenient suspect for wider woes as well. Money and the problems with money could be used to explain what Pound saw as the contemporary diseases of the education system, the status of the arts and the socially-exiled artist, “dry-rot magazitis”, and most violently topical, war. He expressed these dissatisfactions in the pages of *The New Age* as early as 1911.

The New Age represented a crossroads of two dominant radical ideological postures of Britain before the war: the Fabians and the Ruskin-influenced Reactionaries. Leon Surette summarizes the political landscape surrounding Pound and *The New Age* in his study of Pound’s move to radicalism, *Pound in Purgatory*. He describes the Fabians as atheist democratic socialists whose political arm reached

¹⁷³ Ezra Pound, “Hugh Selwyn Mauberely: E.P. V” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 552, l.3

¹⁷⁴ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 31, 32

¹⁷⁵ Peter Nicholls, *Ezra Pound: Politics, Economics and Writing* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1984) 20-30

into the Labour Party. He writes that the Fabians had great faith in technological progress, in the future, and the desire to cure social ills. According to Leon Surette, the reactionaries were less cohesive; they were catholic and conservative in their social and political thinking.¹⁷⁶ Their loudest voices offered solutions to the inherent instability of free enterprise capitalism. *The New Age* offered a forum of debate across the political spectrum and this was an opportunity welcomed by Pound. Pound's weekly meetings with the Orage circle undoubtedly changed his perspective on the world outside of the poem where the social and artistic critique of John Ruskin was certainly a subject of debate. Ruskin's strongest appeal to the likes of Pound "was that he provided an economic justification for expenditure in the arts,"¹⁷⁷ which is exactly the sort of formula for the promotion of culture Pound had been seeking for nearly a decade; Pound had been an advocate of government subsidies for artists since his arrival in London.

Pound's primary artistic mission, as explicated in his first three series for *The New Age*, is the pursuit of a Risorgimento. This is the basis upon which he begins to build his developing economic agenda. For Pound, the desired ends cannot be achieved until the proper means are in place. In other words, no art can be honest until the economic conditions of modern capitalism are lifted from the artist:

The artist is free, [...] That is to say, he must be free, either by circumstance or by heroism. He must either have nothing to gain that he counts gain or that he would count recompense for lost integrity, or he must have nothing to lose, and in this latter case his days are belike short and his labour is apt to be fitful. Even Dante and Villon had the salt bread of patrons.¹⁷⁸

Pound bound his commitment to the subsidy of artists to his ideas of a Risorgimento.

As discussed above, Pound was very fortunate in finding patrons and outlets for his writing. On 12 March 1912, a week before a Pound lecture at London

¹⁷⁶ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 21-22

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 25

¹⁷⁸ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies I" *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

Polytechnic competed with F.T Marinetti's lecture that accompanied the opening of a Futurist exhibit in London, he reported to his prospective father-in-law that his income from his writings had risen to £38 for four months, a figure that would yield £114 per annum; in addition, he had recently secured a ten-year contract with Swift & Co. that guaranteed him another £100 per annum. Together with this, he had the Cravens patronage totaling £200. His income amounted to, he noted proudly, "about £400 per year, with reasonable chance of increase."¹⁷⁹

Pound's fortunes improved still further in August of the same year when Harriet Monroe asked him to be *Poetry's* foreign correspondent. In this new guise he became a missionary of culture and began holding 'evenings' at his flat. These evenings were inspired by another source of income as well as ideas, *The New Age*. His connection to *The New Age* allowed him to feel affluent and secure, which afforded him to venture: "forth to explore and digest as much of London as fell within the range of his interests and sensibilities. Much of his activity in the next few years took place in Kensington which he came to know 'stone by stone' as he knew Venice and later Perugia."¹⁸⁰ In Pound's campaign for patronage in the arts, *The New Age* writings represent a sort of direct address of the wealthy or, at least, a readership who were not necessarily just other artists but socialists and capitalists, politicians and politically-minded citizens, industrialists and the educated classes; the intellectual classes, individuals who could help fulfill the vision of a society that supported the arts.

In "Patria Mia", Pound's earliest piece of social commentary for *The New Age*, he works to convince the wealthy to lift the arts into society through patronage.

¹⁷⁹ Lawrence Rainey, "The Creation of the Avant-Garde: F.T. Marinetti and Ezra Pound" *Modernism/Modernity* 1.3 (1994), 199

¹⁸⁰ Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1970) 110

However, he presents his appeal in a manner that earns very little sympathy and lacks the charm and respect that a wealthy reader might expect, writing:

“It is permitted us to believe that the millionaire is no more a permanent evil that was the feudal over-lord.[...] Nevertheless there seems to be no reason why he should not confer upon society, during his reign, such benefits as he is able. And the centralization of power in his hands makes it very easy for him to display a virtue if he have one.”¹⁸¹

The millionaire will die and should leave gifts as “some record for consideration,” a permanent testament of his honour that, Pound tells us, will disappear unless it is preserved in an artistic masterwork. “His order must pass as all things pass from this earth, save masterwork in thought, and in art.”¹⁸²

This public reception of the theme and tone of these appeals for patronage was to reacquaint Pound with John Quinn, the New York lawyer and art collector whom he had met through W.B. Yeats’ father in 1910. In Pound’s series for *The New Age*, “Affirmations III: Jacob Epstein” which appeared January 21, 1915, he attacks American collectors, “buying autograph MSS. of William Morris, faked Rembrandts and faked Vandykes.” On January 25, Quinn writes to Pound taking issue with what he interpreted as an attack on himself. He explained that he no longer collected manuscripts and that he had canvases by Matisse, Picasso and Derain, and no faked Rembrandts or Van Dykes. In the article, Pound continued, “One looks out on a plutocracy and upon the remains of an aristocracy who ought to know by this time that keeping up the arts means keeping up living artists; that no age can be a great age which does not find its own genius.”¹⁸³ Quinn took issue with this attack as well, responding that he owned more of Augustus John’s work than anyone alive. He went on to inquire about acquiring some of Gaudier-Brzeska’s work and invited Pound to write for *The New Republic*. In a letter dated March 8,

¹⁸¹ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VII” *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 587b

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ezra Pound, “Affirmations III: Jacob Epstein” *The New Age* XVI.12 (January 21, 1915) 312b

1915, Pound responded to Quinn with, “Thanks, apologies, and congratulations.”¹⁸⁴ And with that, their relationship was once again secure.

Quinn went on to become a major financial support of Pound and his literary ambitions in “buying space” in *The Egoist* and *The Little Review* as well as being an invaluable legal support in the publishing world for Pound, Lewis, Joyce, and others. Pound believes that the patron who supports an artist in financial need “makes himself equal to the artist; he is building art into the world; he creates.” But if he purchases art from the established artist then he is no more than a consumer and does nothing for the bringing about of a ‘great age’. He writes to Quinn:

A great age of painting, a renaissance in the arts, comes when there are a few patrons who back their own flair and who buy from unrecognized men. In every artist’s life there is, if he be poor, and they mostly are, a period when [...] the knowledge that they can make £100 or £200 a year without worry (without spending two-thirds of their time running to dealers, or editors) means a peace of mind that will let them work and not undermine them physically. [...] I have a persistent and (editorially) inconvenient belief that America has the chance for a great age if she can be kicked into taking it.¹⁸⁵

Margaret Cravens, Pound’s patron, committed suicide in June, 1912, and when “Patria Mia” first appeared in September of that year, the emphases on subsidy and patronage were much more important than Pound might have imagined months earlier. The piece was mainly an exposé on the state of the arts in America based largely on Pound’s recent visit to New York. Often critical of the state of American art and society, the piece is, at times, full of hope and Pound states some of the ways by which America may arrive at an awakening of arts and letters, its *Risorgimento*. Pound’s encouragements insist that, “if America has any desire to be a centre of artistic activity she must learn her one lesson from the Ptolomies. Art was lifted into

¹⁸⁴ Ezra Pound, to John Quinn, March 8, 1915. *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 53

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53-4

Alexandria by subsidy, and by no other means will it be established in the United States.”¹⁸⁶

In “Patria Mia”, published in *The New Age* in 1912, Pound writes in defense of a position for artists in contemporary society. He insists that there must be a mutual respect among all professions. Professionals can ignore the artist but appreciate his/her presence with no economic burden or responsibility, just respect for being a ‘heavy-weight’ or expert in some line “sufficiently removed from their own.” Pound continues:

Thus many men engaged in commerce, in insurance, in the skilful and finer crafts present to the arts an attitude of indifference which is to the artist comfortable and charming. They like him, let us say, and they pardon him his vagaries. No artist can ask more.”¹⁸⁷

But Pound does ask for more. He finds that the arts are not sustainable in capitalism without the assistance of patronage and subsidy. Thus, through his writings in *The New Age*, Pound begins to become a propagandist for his contemporaries and works even harder to make a case for the financial endorsement of the arts through subsidy and patronage.

Pound’s frustration with the challenges of sustaining the arts in contemporary society seems to find a temporary solution in subsidy and patronage. In *The New Age*, Pound also addresses the impossibility of sustaining ‘good’ art in contemporary literary magazines. He finds the major literary magazines inadequate supporters of literature in that the commercial model of their editing and advertising “favours a sham.”¹⁸⁸

In “Patria Mia IV”, Pound cites the diseases of American letters and finds that above all, “there swells the appalling fungus of our ‘better magazines.’”¹⁸⁹ On a

¹⁸⁶ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VII” *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588a

¹⁸⁷ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia I” *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445b

¹⁸⁸ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies I” *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

¹⁸⁹ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia IV” *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516b

personal level, editors can be seen as the natural enemy of the writer and Pound was to see them like the usurers of subsequent years, as powerful oppressors, “who maintain a strangle hold on a good portion of English and American letters.”¹⁹⁰ “Studies in Contemporary Mentality” is a lengthy series Pound writes for *The New Age* between August 16, 1917 and January 10, 1918 that focuses on contemporary London journals. In his prose since “Patria Mia” five years earlier, Pound had been consistently critical of magazines both in America and Britain. For Pound, editors, and particularly those of the literary magazines, were a part of his perceived tyrannies and economic oppressions placed upon the artist in contemporary culture.

Orage was a strong financial supporter of Pound through his work with *The New Age* and Pound had no equivalent intellectual outlet or financial income in America until Harriet Monroe began *Poetry*. Upon being invited to help with *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, Pound writes to Harriet Monroe, “There is no other magazine in America which is not an insult to the serious artist and to the dignity of his art,”¹⁹¹ and later he calls the magazine-reading public a “(f)iercely accursed groveling vulgus.”¹⁹² It is with this journal that Pound hopes to play an active role in getting the best writing in Europe onto American shores and promises only to publish his own verse in America in the pages of *Poetry*.

In “The Pleasing Art of Poetry” that appeared in *The New Age* in July 1915, Pound imagines “the stupidities of the race” rooted in the passing down of stale traditions. He attempts “to determine how such and such asses came to exist as they are.” He tells us, “no writer is ‘taken seriously’ unless he complies with the defunct standards of ‘the Better Magazines,’ which [...] have done their utmost to keep America out of touch with the contemporary world.” In a barely disguised fashion,

¹⁹⁰ Ezra Pound, “The Pleasing Art of Poetry” *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 229b

¹⁹¹ Ezra Pound, to Harriet Monroe, August 18 1912. *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 9

¹⁹² Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, March 30, 1913 *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 18

Pound credits himself with getting French poetry into the pages of American magazines. "It is only by an organized rebellion, partially managed from London, that modern French writers have been forced into the United States."¹⁹³ These failures of the publishing system violate Pound's aesthetic ideals. The recycling of material that results in this system is in conflict with his early complaint that if works "reveal to us something of which we were unconscious, it feeds us with its energy; if it reveal to us nothing but the fact that its author knew something which we know it draws energy from us."¹⁹⁴ What we also read in these attacks on the publishing of periodicals is an increased use of an aggressive, combative tone, revealing a bitter dissatisfaction that becomes ever more present in Pound's prose and a real hallmark of his developing style.

For Pound, there must be clear development in the art of a nation from one generation to another. The youth, engaged with the "stupidities of the elderly", are of a uniform cause but different approaches: "We are making a new earth and we have different ideas as to the pattern."¹⁹⁵ Throughout "Patria Mia", "Through Alien Eyes", and "America: Chances and Remedies", Pound addresses the intellectual stagnation motivated by economic restraints that he sees propagated in American magazines. Pound accuses *Harper's*, *The Atlantic*, *The Century*, and other magazines of dealing with literature as a commodity to be bought and sold. He sees the era of patronage, where Dante and Villon flourished free from economic constraints, in absolute opposition to state of publishing in 1910s. The pandering to advertisers and the subsequent standardization of literature and art are direct impediments to Pound's desire to bring society into an age of renaissance:

¹⁹³ Ezra Pound, "The Pleasing Art of Poetry" *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 229b

¹⁹⁴ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" *Selected Prose: 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 30

¹⁹⁵ Ezra Pound, "The Pleasing Art of Poetry" *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 230a

The point towards which I strive through all this vagueness is that at no time was there such machinery for the circulation of printed expression—and all this machinery favours a sham. It favours either a false expression or a careless expression or else it favours a thing which is no expression at all. It favours stuff cooked up to suit some editorial palate. And even if his rare utterance will be for a time pushed aside by little or no pains and energy upon the work itself have abundant time for hawking it about.¹⁹⁶

Many years later Pound writes that:

in 1911 Miss Monroe and her backers recognized that verse, to be of any intellectual value, could not be selected merely on the basis of its immediate earning capacity. This idea was not new, but it was not at that moment functioning vigorously in other editorial offices [...] She provided a meal ticket and a meal ticket was badly needed.¹⁹⁷

Pound's objectives were shared by many of his contemporaries. The challenge was to sustain a commitment to their art while being fully aware that their lives would be pressured by relentless economic need. This need demanded that one must address the social constraints and propose new environments within which art could be created free from the demands of commerce:

Pound would inaugurate another intention, not separable from his literary desire, to make social change: the transformation of the economic structure itself, which (Pound was convinced) had produced the literature he would displace—the very literature that was, he would argue, nothing less than his society's symptomatic expression, in the realm of culture, of its totalitarian direction.¹⁹⁸

For Pound, the tyrannies and oppressions were everywhere the artist was, by economic necessity, engaged with in the production and distribution of creative works.

Pound's hostility toward the institutions of higher education, his critique of magazines and the commodification of culture, his encouragement of patronage, and society's duty to provide a place where the artist could live and work all appear in *The New Age* before Douglas, and remain with Pound throughout the increasing

¹⁹⁶ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies I" *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

¹⁹⁷ Ezra Pound, "Small Magazines" *The English Journal* XIX.9 (November 1930) 691-692

¹⁹⁸ Frank Lentricchia, *Modernist Quartet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 49

absurdity of the war. He never entirely abandoned his hope for a Risorgimento in America, but the core focus of Pound's starting point for social reform shifted from a literary rebirth to an economic revolution.

In his study of Ezra Pound, Poet in Exile (1964), Noel Stock tells us that at the time of Pound's first decade in London, the city was the intellectual centre of the English-speaking world: "London, for good or for bad, was the intellectual capital."¹⁹⁹ In an early use of the term that was to define a literary and artistic movement, Pound writes in "Through Alien Eyes III", "London [...] is like Rome of the decadence, so far, at least, as letters are concerned. She is a main and vortex drawing strength from the peripheries."²⁰⁰ While the second quotation is, at worst, a self-serving perception of one London-based poet with aspirations of literary leadership, and the former is, at best, subject to debate, in economic terms it is nearly impossible to deny the centrality of the City of London, the Square Mile, to global finance at the beginning of the Twentieth Century.

By 1913, America was the largest economy in the world, producing one third of all industrial output, and, as John Keegan writes in The First World War, "devoured European capital as fast as it could be lent." Keegan goes on to explain that the bulk of this credit and debit went through the City of London, whose banks acted as a conduit or 'vortex', to borrow Pound's term, of the international exchange of money: "Though its central banking reserve of gold was small [...] the world wide connections of its private banks and discount houses, insurance and commodity companies and equity and produce exchanges made it nevertheless the principal medium of buying, selling and borrowing for all advanced countries."²⁰¹ Pound was

¹⁹⁹ Noel Stock, Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964) viii

²⁰⁰ Ezra Pound, "Through Alien Eyes II" *The New Age* XII.12 (January 23, 1913) 300b

²⁰¹ John Keegan, The First World War (London: Pimlico, 1999) 11

convinced that the economic centrality of London to international commerce had an analogue in the field of cultural production.

From his small studio in London, Pound was already engaged with varied points of cultural production across centuries and continents. From his admiration of Provençal to contemporary French literature, his promotion of American, Irish, and Bengali writers, and his developing fascination with Chinese and Japanese literature and culture, Pound was in full recognition of the vortex of London. He writes to his mother in 1914: "I do not wish to be mayor of Cincinnati nor of Dayton, Ohio. I do very well where I am. London may not be the Paradiso Terrestre, but it is at least some centuries nearer it than is St. Louis."²⁰² He writes to Harriet Monroe, "I don't see why you shouldn't live half the year in London. After all it's the only sane place for any one to live if they've any pretense to letters."²⁰³ For Pound, London was the filter between old Europe and New America and he was proudly acting as assayer of all that passed the vortex. In the next section of this chapter, an examination of *The New Age* writings will show that Pound's ideas of cultural and economic exchange between nations were central to his developing pursuit of the Risorgimento.

Pound expresses an appreciation of the ideas of centralization, the localizing or creation of a physical focal point of commerce and culture, as it created a necessary and beneficial meeting place of knowledge, commerce and art. In "The Renaissance", a piece Pound contributed to *Poetry* in 1914, he calls for a "conscious propaganda", the deliberate gathering of young artists in a capital city of the contemporary world inspired by the scholars of the medieval world. He writes that this

is not 'the revival of classicism'. It is not a worship of corpses. It is an appreciation of the great Roman vortex, and understanding of and an

²⁰² Ezra Pound to Isabel Pound, January 1914. *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 29-30

²⁰³ Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, March 18, 1914. *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 33

awakening to, the value of a capital, the value of centralization, of genius foregathered [...] That sense, that reawakening to the sense of the capital, resulted not in a single great vortex, such as Dante had dreamed of in his propaganda for a great central court, a peace tribunal[...] but it did result in the numerous vortices of the Italian cities, striving against each other not only in commerce but in the arts as well.²⁰⁴

With commerce operating on a global scale through the creditors of London, Pound was determined to create a parallel centre in the capital for the arts.

Pound encourages a very deliberate approach towards a renaissance in arts writing, “we can best serve it by taking stock of what we have, and devising practical measures.”²⁰⁵ In “Patria Mia” (September 5 – November 14, 1912), Pound’s exploration of the state of culture in America, he emphasizes the importance of a capital in the building of a national culture. “There has been no nation in the world which could be called properly ‘nation’ until there arose within it some city ‘whereto all roads did lead.’ After such city has arisen people forget that what seems one nation had aforetime been many.”²⁰⁶ The capital would be the gathering place of artists, and for Pound this concentration of great minds would foster great art: “If it lie within your desire to promote the arts you must not only subsidise the man with work still in him, but you must gather such dynamic particles together; you must set them where they will inter-act, and stimulate each other.”²⁰⁷

In “Through Alien Eyes”, the series of articles in *The New Age* that followed “Patria Mia” and eventually included in the published collection *Patria Mia* (1950), Pound tells us more about the need for a formal gathering of talents and the benefits of such centralization. He observes that children discover the value of order by involvement with ‘institutions’ or ‘centres’ and encourages organizations to conduct such activities:

²⁰⁴ Ezra Pound “The Renaissance” *Poetry* (1914) in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 220

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 210

²⁰⁶ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia I” *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445a

²⁰⁷ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VII” *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588a

“It is unlikely that they are conscious of having discovered the value of order. But they do know that for their own convenience they get about quicker, get fed more, and are in general more comfortable if they obey a few general suggestions, to line up by twos or fours, to go this way rather than that, etc.”²⁰⁸

He writes that London is “like Rome of the decadence, so far, at least, as letters are concerned. She is a main and vortex drawing strength from the peripheries.”²⁰⁹ For Pound it was a case of the serious artist(s) against what he saw as the current state of mental stagnation. The centralization of intellectual and artistic thought was key to the success of his prospective artistic awakening in America for his, and for future, generations.

In “America: Chances and Remedies”, also eventually included in the published edition of *Patria Mia* (1950), Pound puts forth some practical proposals. To avoid the demands upon the artist to produce art as commodity, Pound proposes an assembly or conference, a gathering of minds: “This sort of infiltration of ideas is precisely what does take place in capitals, where the best artists and scholars occasionally meet by accident. The decentralized state of America makes it all the more desirable that some other machinery should be devised for this purpose.”²¹⁰

It has been observed that in Pound’s idea of a renaissance financial support is a necessary first step. But equally important is this idea of a vortex of intellect, a gathering of minds. He writes: “Great art does not depend upon comfort, it does not depend upon the support of riches. But a great age is brought about only with the aid of wealth, because a great age means the deliberate fostering of genius, the gathering-in and grouping and encouragement of artists.”²¹¹ The artist must be surrounded with other ‘dynamic particles’: “You must set them where they will inter-act, and stimulate each other” when they are in their most energetic state, the

²⁰⁸ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes II” *The New Age* XII.12 (January 23, 1913) 276b

²⁰⁹ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes III” *The New Age* XII.13 (January 20, 1913) 300b

²¹⁰ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies III” *The New Age* XIII.3 (May 15, 1913) 58a

²¹¹ Ezra Pound, “The Renaissance” in Pound, Ezra. *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 221

beginning of their careers, “during the years when they will work for the least money.” The worthy/serious artist wants only freedom from financial constraints, “liberty to do his work and little beyond this.”²¹²

As has already been noted, “The Renaissance” addresses the concern of gathering artists, but it also makes appeals for subsidies for the arts, and identifies what Pound sees as the failings of modern publications.

When a civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects. When a civilization is full and anemic it preserves a rabble of priests, sterile instructors, and repeaters of things second hand. If literature is to reappear in America it must come through, but in spite of, the present commercial system of publication.²¹³

Pound also makes very clear arguments of the economic relevance of the poet and his positive impact on material values in society:

The artist is one of the few producers. He, the farmer and the artisan create wealth; the rest shift and consume it [...] People go where there are good works of art. Pictures and sculpture and architecture pay. Even literature and poetry pay, for where there is enough intelligence to produce and maintain good writing, there society is pleasant and the real estate values increase.”²¹⁴

This positioning of the artist as producer is vitally important for Pound, especially in his relationship to *The New Age*. Pound acknowledges that he is ignorant of Syndicalist ideals but has come to what may be similar conclusions “by so different a route, to wit, a capricious study of mediæval art and life.” He concludes that there must be two sorts of property, each with its own rights and protections. He writes in *The New Age*:

there is property passive, which is, in a sense, consumed or used by its owners, and which they must labour to keep in condition. A man’s house is property passive. And there is property active, the value of which depends almost entirely upon the labour of others. And the rights of these two sorts of property are wholly different.”²¹⁵

²¹² Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VII” *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588a

²¹³ Ezra Pound, “The Renaissance” in Pound, Ezra. *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954)

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 222

²¹⁵ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VI” *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 574b

He picks up on this topic later in *The New Age* in “Through Alien Eyes I” (January 16, 1913) when he writes:

The State ought to be supported by a tax on unearned increment. There should be—with the possible exception of a light poll-tax—but one tax, and that should be levied solely on what I have called “property active.” It should be levied on men who make a profit on the labour of other men. It should not be levied on the land which *gives*, and which *should be* cheap. And this sort of tax would end the vicious circle whereby all labour is turned to the loss of the labourer.²¹⁶

These are very progressive ideas and were certainly quite welcome in the pages of a socialist newspaper like *The New Age*.

In this piece, a follow-up to “Patria Mia”, Pound turns his gaze from his home country to England and continues his commentary on property:

From the personal side your sense of property is a never-failing source of astonishment to me. The emphasis which the British subject can put on the possessive pronoun strikes us transpontines as at once hateful and barbaric. In a world of flowing phenomena how comes it that this otherwise quiet person can burst in to violence with a *my* house, *my* this, *my* that, or the other? We are startled. It is unpleasant, a little gruesome.”²¹⁷

For Pound, this emphasis on the material, on personal property, is un-American and undesirable: “I do not say that the American is wholly without sense of property, but his sense of play and of acquisition are much keener than the sense of retention.” He continues, “I believe that because of this perception, we shall supercede you—or any other nation that attempts to conserve first its material sources.”²¹⁸

Pound’s discussion of these clearly economic concerns in *The New Age*, all relate to the value he places on the gathering of minds, of intellectual community, the free-‘flowing phenomena’, the notion of the image, the vortex, and the energy of language, and are also ideas related to Douglasite economics. We find these concerns present as early as 1911, articulated with varied clarity over the decade,

²¹⁶ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes I” *The New Age* XII.11 (January 16, 1913) 252a-b

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 252b

²¹⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia X” *The New Age* XII.1 (November 7, 1912) 12a

and later substantiated by the practical theories of C.H. Douglas to which Pound attached himself in the following decades. Pound displays an early ideological affinity with Douglas years before the two men met and years before Pound read Economic Democracy, an event that had great effect on the development of Ezra Pound, the cultural critic.

CHAPTER 4

The Economics of Exile: Part Two

In C.H. Douglas, Pound finds a voice of dissatisfaction that is central to his world-view, but Pound also finds that this economic leader shares the material and moral problems of contemporary society with which Pound had been taking issue in *The New Age* for nearly a decade: "There is a cause of dissatisfaction with not only the material results of the economic and political systems, but that they result in an environment which is hostile to moral progress and intellectual expansion."²¹⁹ For both Pound and Douglas, the existing economic systems were tyrannies on intellectual development, oppressions infringing individual freedoms and hindering enlightenment: "Systems are made for men, and not men for systems."²²⁰ Pound even echoes the form of this sentiment in 1919 attacking a tyrannical education system where "the student is there for the college, not the college for the student."²²¹

Douglas and Pound are both concerned with facts. Pound writes, "any fact may be 'symptomatic', but certain facts give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, in to their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law."²²² These sorts of facts are what Douglas calls "first principles". Douglas shares Pound's attempts to "define the purposes, conscious or unconscious, which govern humanity in its ceaseless struggle."²²³ The necessity of 'making it new' is present in Douglas in his acknowledgement of the "crumbling institutions and discredited formulae."²²⁴

²¹⁹ C.H. Douglas, *Economic Democracy* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1921) 17

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6-7

²²¹ Ezra Pound, "Revolt of Intelligence II" *The New Age* XXVI.6 (December 11, 1919) 90b

²²² Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction" *The New Age* (December 7, 1911) 130a

²²³ Douglas, *Economic Democracy*. 4

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3

In 1915, Pound writes in *The New Age* that the war is a war of ideals, “a war between two ideas of the State: that is to say Germany believes in the State and individuals be damned, and ‘the Allies’ believe that the individual has certain inalienable rights which it is the duty of the State to preserve to him.”²²⁵ Douglas suggests that the west has been adopting a German style of systematic organisation, “the marshalling of effort in conformity” and “the complete subjection of the individual to an objective which is externally imposed on him.”²²⁶ For Douglas, the apparatus is oppressive to the freedom of the democratic individual through “the forging of social, industrial and political organization which will concentrate control of policy while making effective revolt completely impossible, and leaving its originators in possession of supreme power.”²²⁷ The value of the individual is central to Pound’s aesthetic and social concerns from his first writings in *The New Age*. He praises Henry James, writing, “many have failed to do justice to his propaganda, his continuing labour for individual freedom, his recurrent assaults upon cruelties and oppressions.”²²⁸ Douglas believes that “We must build up from the individual, not down from the state,”²²⁹ a belief shared with Pound when he writes, “In America, our presumption is that those things are right which give the greatest freedom, the greatest opportunity for individual development to the individual, of whatever age or sex or condition.”²³⁰ The two men share this concern of the individual in society. Citing the ideals of the American Declaration of Independence, “the inalienable right of man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” Douglas demands “assertion of the individual considered collectively, over any external interest.”²³¹

²²⁵ Ezra Pound, “American Chaos II” *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471a

²²⁶ C.H. Douglas, *Economic Democracy* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1921) 11

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12

²²⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VIII” *The New Age* XI.26 (October 24, 1912) 611b

²²⁹ Douglas, *Economic Democracy*.8

²³⁰ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia IX” *The New Age* XI.27 (October 31, 1912) 635b

²³¹ Douglas, *Economic Democracy*. 5

The notion of community and the gathering of minds that Pound is concerned with are issues also echoed in Douglas. Pound writes: “The aim of right education is to lead a man out into more varied, more intimate contact with his fellows.”²³² Kenner explains, “what men gain by not being isolated from one another he [Douglas] was later to call ‘the increment of association,’”²³³ a major factor in the capital of Social Credit.

In Douglas, understanding cultural inheritance as a “pattern of energies,”²³⁴ as “design done once and for all,”²³⁵ allows us to understand a fundamental attraction between Pound and Douglas: it is not that which can be sold that has value, but that which yields wealth and well being: “Once think of the cultural inheritance in this way [...] and a *Divina Commedia* acquires economic worth surpassing that of toilet paper, and a Wyndham Lewis has a claim to be fed.”²³⁶

The post-war era was a time when economic liberal orthodoxy prevailed at the academic institutions,²³⁷ and, in Douglas, Pound found the problems of distribution at the centre of the recent conflict and a source of the inequality and oppression he had been addressing since 1910. If the great age, a renaissance, is to come to America, servility cannot equal poverty for artists or other citizens because in poverty the individual is a slave to the entrepreneur for “the vicissitudes of the trade.”²³⁸ Almost a decade earlier in *The New Age* Pound had pointed to this concern writing, “Only among successful men will you find any belief in the possibilities of life; or in the possibility of a new order of procedure in their own sort of

²³² Ezra Pound “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris II” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130a

²³³ Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 311

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 312

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 311

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 312

²³⁷ Meghnad Desai, *The Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2006) 44. I am indebted to Desai for this piece of economic history as well as the observations of Pound’s ignorance of various movements in economic theory and practice that follow in the next paragraph.

²³⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VI” *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564b

business.”²³⁹ The impediment to the individual was, at root, economic, and Pound became fixed on this perspective after he read C.H. Douglas’ Economic Democracy (serialized in *The New Age* in 1919). His certainty was unwavering and Pound seems to have clutched onto Douglas’ theory in the aftermath of the war and was committed to spreading the doctrine for the next twenty years.

As much of Pound’s economic position is defined by what he chose to ignore as by what he chose to accept. It wasn’t until 1936 that John Maynard Keynes published The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, but Pound does not seem to have taken any serious interest in his arguments, calling him an imbecile and “pusillanimous louse.”²⁴⁰ Pound, the exile, also ignores the New Deal in his homeland, America. As a result, he misses the attack on bankers and the programmes of work-generation that were a central part of the New Deal, events that should have impressed a man of his economic opinions. He saw nothing to be optimistic about in Britain coming off the Gold Standard in 1931. And when policies similar to those he championed were employed after the International Economic Conference in 1934, fixing the price of gold and thus devaluing the dollar, Pound was critical and unaffected in his opinion holding that it was a conspiracy by Rothschild to raise the price of gold.²⁴¹ As a poet who had been open-minded to engage new ideas from 1910-1920 in *The New Age*, from Plotinus to Hulme to Confucius, from the poetry of Arnaut Daniel to Rabindranath Tagore to Li Po, from troubadour lyrics to Imagisme to Homage to Sextus Propertius, Pound latched on to Douglas and social credit in an uncharacteristically loyal and consistent manner.

Douglas, who had developed his theories while working with the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) during World War I, set out to apply his

²³⁹ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VI” *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564b

²⁴⁰ Ezra Pound in John Tytell, Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1987) 7

²⁴¹ Meghnad Desai, The Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2006) 45

understanding of engineering in a new perspective on economics. Social Credit, the notion that purchasing power of the workers must be consistent with the total value of production, was, at root, an argument for individual economic freedom. The appeal to Pound's sense of economic alienation and the value he placed on individual freedom made Douglas' theories extremely relevant to Pound's world-view.

For Pound, *Economic Democracy* was a revelation. In many ways, it addressed his own concerns about the decay of culture, the state of the world around him, the recent war, and most importantly the place for the arts in a commercial capitalist society. Douglas presented a decaying civilisation under the contemporary mode of capitalism; he presented a culmination of the contemporary diseases Pound had been addressing in *The New Age*, and elsewhere, since 1911. Hugh Kenner writes that Douglas' insights "gave meaning to the present and the past alike, and relieved art from the impasse of aestheticism by absolving it of the need to demonstrate its immediate utility."²⁴²

Even after his increased attention to the details and effects of economics, Pound ignored other major developments that addressed economic concerns. The examples of the New Deal in America or Keynes' The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money have already been offered in this chapter. But Social Credit became much more than a radical theory, it was a theory put into practice, and this went completely unnoted by Ezra Pound.

In 1935 The Social Credit Party of Canada was founded. The movement had a strong following in the western provinces as well as in the French-speaking province of Québec. In the province of Alberta, Reverend William Aberhart formed the Alberta Social Credit League. Becoming the Premier of Alberta in the provincial

²⁴² Hugh Kenner, The Pound Era (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 316-317

election of 1935, "Bible Bill", as Rev. Aberhart was called, formed the only government in the world that adhered to Douglas' theories of social credit. Not in Europe or in the intellectual centres of America, where Pound may have imagined such a system taking hold, but in a backwater Canadian province, with no intellectual pretensions and that had not produced 'great art', did Social Credit come into practice. In light of these facts, Pound's oversight must be appreciated.

Pound's lack of formal reaction to these significant developments in an area with which he had become very concerned reflects his tendency to remain alien, to remain the isolate. At once profoundly enthusiastic about a new idea or new work or new artist, Pound takes the germ of that first impression away from the worldly context and creates an ideal that perhaps does not exist. Without venturing beyond the scope of this paper, the point must be made that Pound's detached intellectualism parses ideas into tangible compartments where they develop as Pound permits, with little or no relation to their surrounding counterparts, or in the case of Social Credit, their ultimate outcomes.

While there is, as with most areas of Pound studies, a lack of consensus surrounding the effect of Douglas and this economic revelation on Pound's poetry, it has been argued that Pound's defining economic concern is, at root, one of exchange. We see this in his writings in *The New Age*, and, as some critics have proposed, in his early poetry.

"American Chaos"(1915) was written for *The New Age* during the First World War, after the sinking of the passenger ship *Lusitania* but before America joined the Allies. As an American expatriate living in London, Pound needed to make sense of the issues both for himself and for his readers. Cleverly, he ties his response closely to his own vision of the literary and cultural exchange between old

and new world, between Europe and America, via his exiled position in the vortex of London. For Pound, politics “are inextricably bound in with literature.”²⁴³

In the series, Pound addresses the “firm friendship between nations,” asking: “How, in heaven’s name, can two nations become acquainted?” He suggests a discrepancy between the sentiment and the fact, a failure in exchange or translation. The intimacy between nations, Pound tells us, is a literary one based on literary impressions more than commerce or personal acquaintances. Therefore this literary impression must be accurate: “Until there is an exact correspondence between what a man says to his friend in private and what he writes in his book or his paper *there is no literature*, and there is no firm basis for alien friendship and acquaintance.”²⁴⁴

Three years later, in “What America Has to Live Down”(1918), Pound once again engages this question of exchange in a discussion of ideas and perceptions between nations. Pound addresses the static nature of literary and intellectual thought, writing:

America cannot expect to be taken at her own estimate, by other nations, so long as that estimate is expressed in a pseudo-professorial journalese language full of altitudinous generalities and unpunctured by hard, concise statement; independent of a pre-acceptance of certain ideas current, or rather not current but static, in America and already demoded elsewhere.

He continues:

America has not listened to Europe. She has tolerated a ‘better magazine’ language, and a system of publishing which has advised her NOT to listen to Europe.[...] Nothing that America *says* will be of the slightest interest, for the simple reason that America has tolerated and developed his system of vapulous writing which has no relation to fact.²⁴⁵

This continued emphasis on ‘fact’, accuracy, precision and concision of fact, illuminates a consistency between, if not a conflation of, Pound’s aesthetic and

²⁴³ Ezra Pound, “Affirmations VI: Analysis of this Decade” *The New Age* XVI.15 (February 11, 1915) 410a

²⁴⁴ Ezra Pound, “American Chaos II” *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471b

²⁴⁵ Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down II” XXIII.18 (August 29, 1918) 281a

socio-economic concerns. He refers to literary perceptions of America in England as “intellectual commerce” and notes a wide gap between the two countries that, despite being Allies in war, have not become ‘acquainted’. Pound is making a political defense with literary and cultural arguments. He is making a case for literature as a currency. The war committed his literary mission to a political world vision and we read more evidence of this binding of the literary and socio-economic: “You cannot converse without a common idiom. Literature so written that it can be read without pain is the natural medium for the exchange of ideas between nations.”²⁴⁶ According to Pound, the only facts conveyed with precision and accuracy in the war have been material exchanges of military troops, munitions, food and supplies. As he writes, America is earning the respect of Europe on the battlefield despite three years neutrality in the war and more years of ‘palaver’. What remains is “America’s ludicrous inability to make herself understood by the written and spoken word.”²⁴⁷

Pound envies France for her ‘French Clarity’: “France has had inner strength and a means of communication with the rest of the world. A means of speaking to people *whom she does not govern*, and in whose commercial affairs she may have little concern.”²⁴⁸ Pound is not ignorant of the economic internationalism that is binding nations to nations, but he demands a cultural commerce as well. He calls for a literature and a system of publication that presents precise relation to fact and facilitates the commerce between nations, especially in this era of war, to save civilization. “When words cease to cling close to things, kingdoms fall, empires wane and diminish,”²⁴⁹ and the effects of the capitalist marketplace, seen in

²⁴⁶ Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down I” XXIII.17 (August 22, 1918) 267a

²⁴⁷ Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down III” XXIII.19 (September 5, 1918) 298b

²⁴⁸ Ibid 298b

²⁴⁹ Ezra Pound, “Affirmations VI: Analysis of this Decade” *The New Age* XVI.15 (February 11, 1915) 410a

contemporary magazines and publishing systems, were hindering the arts from performing its function of direct presentation.

The continuous struggle of the poet to maintain integrity as an artist, within the commercial and financial demands that come with modernity, plagues Pound's artistic efforts. Pound attacks the failures of the magazines to promote new forms, instead insisting on publishing poetry that "repeats in weak verse the idea expressed in the prose of last year's magazines."²⁵⁰ But as art becomes, by necessity, something to be bought and sold and distributed in a market economy, the poem becomes a medium of exchange and thus language, form, and style become the currencies of gold, silver, and paper money.

Richard Sieburth has argued that this exchange value of language was present in Pound's adoption of the troubadour tradition. As early as 1910, Pound was making associations between art and economics. His troubadour poetry imitated an archaic style of medieval poetry that often expressed courtly love. Employing these medieval forms show us Pound at an early stage in his development, before the aesthetic doctrines of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", "A Few Don't's" or "The Serious Artist". In Pound's early lyrics the poet's presence is very much at the centre of the poem's action, the language archaic, "far from life," and the form far from 'modern.' Richard Sieburth illuminates the connections between art and economics in Pound's early poetry. He tells us that the first occurrence of the term 'usury' in Pound's poetry occurs in "Octave" (1910)

Fine songs, fair songs, these golden usuries
 Her beauty earns as but just increment,
 And they do speak with a most ill intent
 Who say they give when they pay debtor's fees.
 I call him bankrupt in the courts of song
 Who hath her gold to eye and pays her not,
 Defaulter do I call the knave who hath got

²⁵⁰ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia IV" *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516a-b

Her silver in his heart, and doth her wrong.²⁵¹

Here, the poet's verses, his poetic utterances, are a medium of exchange. His words attempt to translate the beauty (represented by gold and silver) of the Lady and thus be made their equivalents. It reads like a contract where the poem is a measure, appraising the beauty of the Lady; the words as measures of value, like gold, and thus a medium of exchange.²⁵² In this way, we can understand the emphasis on accuracy of sentiment and direct treatment of the thing in economic terms, ideals at least partly informed by the importance of an accurate relation between poem and object, between goods and gold. If we can understand Pound's poetics at least figuratively as an economics, we begin to see an important consistency of thought that permeates his pre-Douglas aesthetic and economic concerns.

Critics have noted a striking difference between the published poems in *Ripostes* and those that preceded them. The literary influences on Pound's poetry that are traceable in *The New Age* writings are the focus of the following chapter, but it is enough to say here that after the attempts at a new style through Imagism and Vorticism, Pound remained unsatisfied. He closed a chapter of his life in verse, writing in "Epilogue" (*Lustra*, 1916):

O chansons foregoing
 You were a seven days' wonder,
 When you came out in the magazines
 You created considerable stir in Chicago,
 And now you are stale and worn out,
 You're a very depleted fashion,
 A hoop-skirt, a calash,
 An homely, transient antiquity.

Only emotion remains.

Your emotions?

²⁵¹ Ezra Pound, "Octave" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 144

²⁵² Richard Sieburth, "In Pound We Trust: The Economy of Poetry/The Poetry of Economics" *Critical Inquiry* XIV.1 (Autumn, 1987) 144-145

Are those of a maître-de-café.²⁵³

The poem simultaneously shuns the styles Pound was convinced were recycled in modern literary magazines and addresses the antiquated styles he had borrowed for over 7 years, forms now, finally, banished from his future work. Years earlier Pound had written in *The New Age* that the ‘living art’

should like to break up *cliché*, to disintegrate these magnetized groups that stand between the reader of poetry and the drive of it [...] for it is not until poetry lives again ‘close to the thing’ that it will be a vital part of contemporary life [...] and the only way to escape from rhetoric and frilled paper decoration is through beauty—‘beauty of the thing’, certainly, but besides that, ‘beauty of the means’ [...] something which exalts the reader, making him feel that he is in contact with something arranged more finely than the commonplace.²⁵⁴

While some critics see this piece as a disclosure of what changes in Pound’s positions (Thomas Grieve) and others see it as the embryonic statement of his entire aesthetic (Hugh Witemeyer), the idea of images charged with meaning became central to Pound’s aesthetic and the core principle of his movements in Imagisme and Vorticism.

According to Noel Stock, between *Canzoni* and *Ripostes* Pound “broke the back of the problem confronting him,” to achieve in his own verse a language both precise and natural. Stock writes that ransacking records, *The New Age* 1911 articles, “The Seafarer”, Pound’s troubadour research, gets us no nearer to an answer of *how* Pound did it: “all we know is that he did it, and that *Ripostes* is suddenly full of a new note, containing several poems perfectly worked in the ‘modern cadence.’”²⁵⁵ But many of them are not, and the “Epilogue” that appears in the *Lustra* collection years later expresses this frustration as having been anything but becoming

²⁵³ Ezra Pound “Epilogue” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 292

²⁵⁴ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: Un breu brisarat temps braus” *The New Age* X.16 (February 15, 1912) 370a

²⁵⁵ Noel Stock, *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964) 40

“suddenly full of a new note.” For Donald Davie, *Ripostes* “marks a new departure.”²⁵⁶

T.S. Eliot writes in “Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry” (1917) that: in *Ripostes* there are traces of a different idiom [...] the diction is more restrained, the flights shorter, the dexterity of technique is less arresting [...] but there is a much more solid substratum to this book; there is more thought; greater depth, if less agitation on the surface. The effect of London is apparent; the author has become a critic of men, surveying them from a consistent and developed point of view; he is more formidable and disconcerting; in short, much more mature.²⁵⁷

As a “critical” movement, the “Imagisme” of 1912-14 set out “to bring poetry up to the level of prose.”²⁵⁸ Pound writes in *The New Age* of the diseases of American letters: dry rot magazitis, school of virility or red blood, gorgeous school (Kipling, Swinburne), sociological verse (weak verse that has been said in better prose). The movements in which he engages to make a poetry “closer to the thing” is a simultaneous attempt to make poetry harder, saner, more accurate and more ‘economic’, as well as to earn poetry respect as a literary art of social value.

Richard Sieburth writes that Pound’s

abandonment of his early troubadour manner in late 1912 for the modernist poetics of Imagism entailed more than the mere rejection of the aureate archaisms of his first collections of verse. It represented a fundamental attempt to get his poetry off the gold standard, to defetishize the signifier, as it were, to establish a poetics whose economy would be based on the direct exchange between subject and object, language and reality, word and world.²⁵⁹

Sieburth suggests that Pound’s terminology can be understood in economic terms. The notions of power and precision, accuracy, and energy relate an innate value Pound insists must be translated with care. The disdain he expresses for excess, emphasizing direct treatment, words ‘close to the thing’, “escape from rhetoric and frilled paper decoration”, creates a poetics of immediacy. This poetics will close “the

²⁵⁶ Donald Davie, *Ezra Pound: Poet as Sculptor* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965) 20

²⁵⁷ T.S. Eliot, *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1917) 16-17

²⁵⁸ Ezra Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir*. (New York: New Directions, 1970) 83

²⁵⁹ Richard Sieburth, “In Pound We Trust: The Economy of Poetry/The Poetry of Economics” *Critical Inquiry* XIV.1 (Autumn, 1987) 147

gap between word and object, poet and reader, poem and 'the real,'"²⁶⁰ by nurturing a language of transparent translation or direct exchange between the poetic utterance and the 'thing,' the essence of the Imagist ideal.

This directness also shows Pound's distrust of the metaphor, that which is to be made a likeness of some other. This, too, has a parallel economic concern. Metaphor goes against the ideal of 'direct treatment', mixing abstraction with the concrete.²⁶¹ Just as the metaphor comes between poem and reader, money comes between the goods and the buyer and therefore carries with it the idea that it is the representation of all things. As a general equivalent or substitute for the real, money most resembles those "abstractions" that Pound's Imagist doctrine teaches us to "go in fear of".

So, to assume that Pound's poetry was apolitical until encountering Douglas does not do justice to the poetry, especially the translations (which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter), forms within which we can witness Pound's concerns of exchange, translation itself, as well as his development as a political aesthete. In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" Pound positions himself as an assistant in the rebirth of poetry. He discusses the 'luminous details' of art and artists, the sources of energy made dynamic in masterpieces and distinguishes between the 'donative' and 'symptomatic' works and authors, the former being the sort Pound would hope to create and the type of artist he would like to be. The donative artist is one who "seems to draw down in to the art something which was not in the art of his predecessors."²⁶² The title of the piece is enough to make clear the value Pound places on his 'discovering' items or creators of value. Isis gathered the dismembered limbs of Osiris, whose consequent rebirth was the legendary basis of an Egyptian

²⁶⁰ Richard Sieburth, "In Pound We Trust: The Economy of Poetry/The Poetry of Economics" *Critical Inquiry* XIV.1 (Autumn, 1987) 150

²⁶¹ Ezra Pound, "A Retrospect" *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 3-14

²⁶² Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IV" *The New Age* X (December 21, 1911) 179a

fertility ritual. By identifying himself with Isis, Pound reveals an ambition to bring lesser-known inventors to more readers through his translations and therefore instigate a renaissance of English poetry.

Pound's ability and history of successes in finding and nurturing new talents once again filled him with authority upon 'discovering' Douglas. After meeting Douglas, the early *Cantos* were put aside until Pound "could rethink the long poem's direction. Its scope, when he finally clarified it, was to be nothing less than a vast historical demonstration, enlightened by Douglas' insight."²⁶³

Douglas' argument can be summarised as underconsumptionist. He observed that the total of money spent on production(wages, salaries, etc.) falls short of being able to buy what is produced. This shortage is a problem of exchange that must be made up by the 'creation' of money, or credit. This interest-bearing debt is the *usura* to which Pound refers in the *Cantos* and his later writings on money and civilization. Surette explains:

when tax revenues don't meet the government's fiscal obligation the treasury borrows money from the central bank by selling treasury bills, that is, government promissory notes. The bank buys the treasury bills by the simple expedient of entering the equivalent amount on its books as a debt owing to the bank. Thus the state pays interest on money that the bank has created out of nothing. Douglas was scandalized by this practice[...] though the profits were not nearly as large as Douglas imagined."²⁶⁴

The connection between Douglas' economic model to Pound's concern over the tyranny of conventions and standardization is wonderfully summarised by Kenner:

The money is created without regard to need, but only with an eye to (1) generation of interest, and (2) in case of foreclosure, salability of the security. Try to get a bank loan to build an unorthodox house: you will encounter the bank's fear that if you cannot meet your payments they will have trouble reselling the house they have seized. Thus the trend toward standardization of

²⁶³ Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 408

²⁶⁴ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 31

houses.”²⁶⁵

The implication here is that if neither state nor patrons will sustain the arts, then publishing becomes the artist's sole support. In that case, money will dictate the editorial standards to which art must comply to be deemed publishable and thus ready for consumption, resulting in the increased commodification and standardization of art and the alienation of the artist by threat of economic exclusion.

The idea of capital, of hoarding or saving, that was so central to Pound's understanding of Douglas, can also be traced in his early writings for *The New Age*. Peter Nicholls has pointed at this connection, arguing that the congruency between some of Pound's and Douglas' ideas created a difficulty in the development of Pound's post-London, or post-Douglas, style. Pound's deeply ingrained hostility to financial wealth found economic substance in Douglas and the understanding of the economy primarily in terms of consumption and exchange enabled Pound to “preserve a distance between what he would later call ‘the fine thing held in the mind, and the inferior thing ready for consumption.’”²⁶⁶

The fact of Pound's substantial production of articles for all periodicals, including the *The New Age*, from 1917 -1920 as social/literary, visual arts, and music critic displayed a continued financial need. Kenner tells us that the years 1917-1920 were of “intense overwork.” Kenner writes, “Much—too much—had to be done because the landlord wanted paying or the soupbone replenishing.” Pound struggles to compose his poetry with the dedication it requires “needing time in which to do the writing that should pay the rent.” Kenner goes on to quote Pound, saying:

What I had written as a free agent... was the solidest; what I had written at a guinea a shot for Orage was worth gleaning; but no article for which I had been paid three to five guineas was worth a hoot': this despite the fact that 'I

²⁶⁵ Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 408

²⁶⁶ Peter Nicholls, *Ezra Pound: Politics, Economics and Writing* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1984) 25

could recall no occasion on which I had written anything against my belief and conscience.²⁶⁷

And although Kenner calls Pound's writing for *The New Age*, and other writing that was done in order to pay the rent, 'ephemeral', we nonetheless note consistencies in thought and theme, or 'propaganda.' But the point here is that Pound was increasingly plagued by economic realities that were hindering his artistic mission. Kenner tells us that "these are not conditions of freedom."²⁶⁸ Times were ideal for the entry of Douglas into Pound's social and intellectual life.

There is, without doubt, a shift in Pound's poetic style between 1909's *Personae* and *Ripostes* in 1912, and likewise between 1912 and 1916, between his imagist poetry and his 'war poetry' (*Cathay*, "Homage to Sextus Propertius" and "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley") and again, finally, with the adoption of the epic form as his sole artistic output in *The Cantos*. Pound

believed in the need for a 'poetry which corresponds exactly to the emotion or shade of emotion to be expressed', and made a forecast that twentieth century poetry, at least during the next decade [...] would be 'harder and saner', would become 'austere, direct, free from emotional slither.'²⁶⁹

Indeed, it may have been these emotions to which poetry was to correspond, the emotions he references in "Epilogue" (cited above), *his* emotions, which dictate the trajectory of his aesthetic in the 1910s.

When Henri Gaudier-Brezska was killed in action in 1915, Pound immediately set out to compile a memoir: "We have lost the best of the young sculptors and the most promising. The arts will incur no worse loss from the war than this. One is rather obsessed with it."²⁷⁰ Gaudier-Brezska's death represented a tragic loss for society since artists were, to Pound, the natural leaders of civilization.

²⁶⁷ Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 302

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 303

²⁶⁹ Ezra Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 170

²⁷⁰ Ezra Pound to Felix E. Schelling, (June 1915) *Selected Letters: 1907-1941* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 61

But with Lewis also enlisted, Gaudier-Brezska's death put a dent in Pound's plans of an artistic renaissance. Torrey notes that following Gaudier-Brezska's death, the voice of Ezra Pound became increasingly caustic and strident. "The subsequent outpouring of vituperation served to isolate him still further from polite London society."²⁷¹ Pound proceeded most confidently in the face of opposition.

In 1914, Pound was, in many ways, a central figure in the literary world of London. He had been a founder of two movements in English poetry and art and was very active in journals on both sides of the Atlantic. He had a strong belief in the potential impact he could have on literature and society and *The New Age* writings can attest to this. But the war years saw a simultaneous decline in this influence and increase in his breadth of interest. His programs had moved from solitary ones of a poet donning the masks of 14th and 18th century troubadours and poets, through the literary ideologies of a group 'movement' with Imagisme, to the Vorticist movement that was to incorporate visual as well as literary arts, and eventually to the ideogrammatic program of the Cantos. This final development was to see elements of all the arts as well as politics, economics, psychology, history and an array of world languages incorporated to address the concerns Pound was alerted to with the reading of Douglas.

Contrary to what his apparent increased production may imply, Pound was finding further alienation. He was not enjoying the respect and interest he had initially received those first years in London. "Everyone was criticizing him, and since the publication of BLAST, trying to dissociate themselves from him."²⁷² Vorticism was seen as a silly movement, and this did not reflect well on Pound who had promoted his movement with a style in imitation of F.T. Marinetti. His brash

²⁷¹ E. Fuller Torrey, The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secret of St. Elizabeths (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1984) 85

²⁷² Ibid., 80

and vigilant attitude worked against him during the war. Many began to lose interest in what Pound had to say about poetry, let alone politics and economics. “The opinion of everyone is that he has nothing more to say,” and Amy Lowell writes, ““I am afraid that he is tuberculous. It has even been hinted that this may have attacked his brain””.²⁷³ Pound fought a personal war as the central powers began theirs in 1914 and it continued for years. This pushed an already self-confident revolutionary spirit to further extremes of a mentality at opposition with increasingly variable foes. Hugh Kenner sees this era as a major turning point for Pound’s thoughts and thought processes: “The long term psychic damage Pound underwent is beyond calculation.”²⁷⁴ These factors of exile and alienation can be seen to have driven Pound with great conviction to new avenues of expression and new topics in politics and economics as shown by his *New Age* and other writings.

It is important to understand the personal frontier of battle that Pound found himself engaged with in London. This has been discussed in his notion of exile or isolation in Chapter Two of this dissertation, and will be further discussed in Chapters Five and Six in terms of his literary self-positioning and translations in *The New Age*. But it is absolutely necessary to appreciate Pound’s enemy stance as the war broke out. This positioning very much plays into the development of his emerging hostility and hard-line positions that would eventually be his default stance for political and economic expression. Perhaps this posture as isolate relates to the perceived alienation Pound experienced, and indeed, encouraged, from exile. However, in these years in London he was adapting his masks, slightly, for each new contact, both to be accepted as a writer and, hopefully, financially independent. As such, he was on the way to, what he called in his letters, “being in the gang.”

²⁷³ Amy Lowell in E. Fuller Torrey, *The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secret of St. Elizabeths* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1985) 82

²⁷⁴ Hugh Kenner in Torrey, *The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secret of St. Elizabeths*. 82

And he did find a place, if only temporarily, in the gang. In these circles was created a home for one of Pound's best masks, as T.S. Eliot later observed,²⁷⁵ the one of an aggressive, sharp tongued "anti-received opinions mood" inspired by the social need to be defiant in the face of Georgian boredom as well as to adverse reviews of his poetry.

Beyond Pound's worries regarding what the literary world would do with him, he had more immediate concerns. Around 1914-1915, after Vorticism's collapse, Pound stayed with Yeats, but also began work with Ernest Fellonosa's notes on Chinese, Noh plays, and Confucious. Noh plays "were made only for the few, for the nobles." He was also seriously worried about money as expressed explicitly in letters to Lewis and rationally in articles in the *New Age* and *Poetry*. Pound revived the idea of government subsidization of artists with "Literary Prizes."²⁷⁶ But the war climate was not exactly encouraging a society led by visionary poets funded by taxpayers. A time of such loss and disaster shattered many perceptions of the world, and was no time for a renaissance in poetry that had "blasted" the country suffering such tragedies.

The gathering of artists was not going to plan. The centralisation or concentration of intellectuals and artists was not happening in London as he had hoped. This, mixed with the personal losses and disillusionment brought on by the war, sent Pound reeling, unsure where to take his propaganda next, not losing focus on the fact that "you must set them where they will inter-act, and stimulate each other."²⁷⁷ Although he was to move to Paris from 1921-1924, it was in Italy where Pound was ultimately to settle. "A thousand candles together blaze with intense

²⁷⁵ T.S. Eliot in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 109

²⁷⁶ Ezra Pound, "Literary Prizes," *Poetry*, 7 (1915): 304-305.

²⁷⁷ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VII" *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588b

brightness. No one candle's light damages another's. So is the liberty of the individual in the ideal and fascist state."²⁷⁸

But Pound continued his artistic mission and his early aesthetic concerns are read in contributions to *The New Age* after 1918 as much as before 1914. He writes of precision, the finer pigment, "fewer strokes of the brush"²⁷⁹, "intent on the matter at hand"²⁸⁰ as B.H. Dias, and he emphasizes "precision" and "no excess"²⁸¹ as William Atheling. He insists on the precision of language, writing in "What America Has to Live Down II":

You would throw out any clerk who wrote an invoice in the style of the literati whom you have tolerated. And the affairs of the intellect cannot be run in a language looser and less efficient than that needed for the affairs of the Chewing Gum Trust, the Cuspidor, Ltd., or the Amalgamated Pants-Button Co."²⁸²

While Pound continues to profess aspects of his aesthetic vision in his prose, the effects of the war on the arts do not go unnoticed. Pound's desire for a strong art that can be carried in to the future, the masterwork that is 'durable', had come under threat by the war. As B.H. Dias, Pound writes:

the current carelessness regarding durability is a parallel to the incursion of journalism upon literature; in so far as it is a desire to catch the day's audience with as little trouble as possible, and to care nothing for tomorrow, it is simple jerry-building, and most condemnable [...] The dealer cares nothing for the artist's temperament or his skill in invention; he wants a sound investment and beyond that an investment that will give lightning profits.²⁸³

²⁷⁸ Ezra Pound, "A Visiting Card", in *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 276

²⁷⁹ B.H. Dias, "Art Notes" *The New Age* XXIII.2 (May 9, 1918) 29

²⁸⁰ B.H. Dias, "Art Notes" *The New Age* XXIV.11 (January 16, 1919) 179

²⁸¹ William Atheling, "Music: Some Recent Concerts" *The New Age* XXII.10 (January 3, 1918) 190b

²⁸² Ezra Pound, "What America Has to Live Down II" *The New Age* XXIII.18 (August 29, 1918) 281b

²⁸³ B.H. Dias, "Art—And Pastels" *The New Age* XXII.16 (February 14, 1918) 310

The exchange of words for wages is an inadequate system for fostering the best in art and will not, according to Pound, create masterworks. Further, the system does not allow for proper exchange of ideas between nations.

Pound's central concern of exchange, the concern he expresses throughout the war, that of conversation between nations, remains central. He had accused the systems of publication and magazines of jeopardizing this relationship, but by the autumn of 1918, he revives a critique of two other continuing obstacles. Six years earlier Pound had written in *The New Age*, "I want the duty on foreign books removed,"²⁸⁴ and the sentiment becomes ever more pertinent during the war years. He revisits the issue in two successive articles in 1918, "Tariff and Copyright" and "Copyright and Tariff". Pound writes:

Among the present hindrances to communication, two at least are utterly needless; the first, America's demodé and mediæval import duty on books, an atavism with which the city of Paris had dispensed in the sixteenth century, and the elimination of which aided in no small degree to keep Paris a centre of civilization; the second hindrance is the red tape and insecurity of the copyright regulations.²⁸⁵

These hindrances were very practical concerns for Pound as he had struggled to get his books, as well as those of Joyce, for example, published and distributed in America. But these hindrances were also ideological. Pound's perspective was that the obstacle of provincialism in the American state of mind could be assisted with the facilitation of international communication and exchange. But "red tape" and copyright regulations were interfering with that communication and thus the coming of a great age of culture.

The obstacles of copyright and tariff are by no means new additions to Pound's list of enemies of the artist, but they are related to the others he had overtly addressed up to this point. Further, they appear as a list of the series of "stupidities of

²⁸⁴ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia XI" *The New Age* XII.2 (November 14, 1912) 33

²⁸⁵ Ezra Pound, "Tariff and Copyright" *The New Age* XXIII.22 (September 26, 1918) 348b

the race”²⁸⁶ that Pound had been addressing in *The New Age* since 1912. “Patria Mia” saw Pound identify the imminence of a Risorgimento and, in 1913 (“America: Chances and Remedies”), he observed the likelihood of this awakening, if only certain stupidities and tyrannies could be overcome; 1914 was Pound’s year of focused appeal for subsidy and patronage in *The New Age* and elsewhere; in 1915 he began critical readings of ‘the better magazines’ in America and problems with the systems of publication; 1916 he focused on his own poetry; in 1917 he addresses the stupidities of provincialism in “Provincialism the Enemy”, and he turns his critique of magazines and publishing to England with “Studies in Contemporary Mentality”; and by 1918 we see the import tariff on books and copyright obstacles as his cited disadvantages to the public as well as the authors.

Pound returns to ideas expressed earlier in the decade in *The New Age* with “Pastiche: The Regional” (1919), a work that addresses all of the issues listed above and acts as a sort of vortex of a decade of Pound’s social ideas. Unfortunately, it reads like that, too, and we witness Pound’s style becoming more fragmentary and unapologetic; he shifts from topic to topic, imbeds other languages without pause for translation, and confesses to consciously clutching at a thesis that, for the reader, never seems to materialise.

Pound sets out to address idiocy “and discriminate between different species of imbecility.”²⁸⁷ The series focuses on the south of France and discusses provincialism, localism, or ‘regionalism’, factors that work against the centralization in vibrant cities: “The capital, the vortex, is that which draws intelligence into it, not that which builds up walls for its own ‘protection’—ie., isolation or ‘advantage.’”²⁸⁸ So we have the vortex bringing intelligence together and an emphasis on avoiding

²⁸⁶ Ezra Pound, “The Pleasing Art of Poetry” *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 229b

²⁸⁷ Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional I” *The New Age* XXV.7 (June 12, 1919) 124

²⁸⁸ Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional II” *The New Age* XXV.9 (June 26, 1919) 156a

protection or isolation and therefore encouraging exchange or dialogue with, one is to assume, other vortices. This exchange becomes another goal of the series as Pound searches for authors “that will help the foreigner to converse in the French of our generation.”²⁸⁹

In this decade of writing for *The New Age*, “Pastiche: The Regional” is the melting pot in which the alchemist attempts to throw in varied ingredients, Pound’s usual suspects of tyranny, stupidity and oppression, and make sense of what he calls in these articles ‘modern complexity.’ He assures us: “these fragmentary statements are not made haphazard. They have (give me a few pages’ or a few paragraphs’ grace to prove it) a bearing on my thesis.”²⁹⁰

But what this series ultimately exposes is a writer and thinker obviously struggling to find a unifying factor that can bring all of what Pound called the “stupidities of the race”²⁹¹ to some simple resolution. Literary internationalism, the better understanding between nations through literature, cannot be attained because of the intricate joint challenges of provincialism, misguided education systems, religion (a recent addition to Pound’s array of concerns), magazine publishing errors, the obfuscation of history, and the constraints on the artist under capitalism. He ends “Pastiche: The Regional XI” with a statement of his central defining question of his decade of writing for *The New Age*, a question that sees his concerns of aesthetics and socio-economics bound together in interdependent ratios. He writes:

Does the system or a system of social arrangement provide the proportionate number of models and inventions; of architecture; of the arts; of literature which is the constant castigation and improvement of our means of thought and communication; of life, i.e., manners in intercourse?²⁹²

²⁸⁹ Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional VI” *The New Age* XXV.16 (August 14, 1919) 268a

²⁹⁰ Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional II” *The New Age* XXV.9 (June 26, 1919) 156a

²⁹¹ Ezra Pound, “The Pleasing Art of Poetry” *The New Age* XVII.10 (July 8, 1915) 229b

²⁹² Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional XI” *The New Age* XXV.22 (September 23, 1919) 368a

This question of proportion is an economic concern for the arts in society. Pound is demanding a just ratio between expense and result, or product, in the ‘order of society,’ in the ‘system of social arrangement.’ At the same time that these articles were appearing in *The New Age*, C.H. Douglas had serialized “Economic Democracy” in the journal’s pages (June 5, 1919 to August 7, 1919). The timing was ideal. Pound had not been able to affect the magazines or the systems of publishing in ways he desired. It had proven to be no time for the propaganda of subsidy for the arts. Pound was searching for a unifying element to bring the diseases of culture, the causes of “the chaos of stupidity” that he continued to address, together, and therefore more manageable to cure or remedy than they had been.

We find parts of Pound’s writing full of a new economic concern, or at least full of new vocabulary in discussing those economic and social concerns with which discussions of literature or the arts in *The New Age* had become so integrated. Pound addresses ‘labour’ and ‘Labour’, ‘Capital’ and usury, central terms in the presentation of Douglas’ arguments.

Pound makes the most explicitly economic pronouncements thus far in his literary output for *The New Age* and becomes politically charged with the fuel of Douglas. He writes in 1919: “It is the duty of a sane manufacturing system to over produce every luxury which tends to increase the comforts and amenities of existence—to over-produce until these things are within every man’s reach.”²⁹³ We witness economics, and specifically Douglas’ ideas, begin to permeate Pound’s prose in the series “Revolt of Intelligence”(November 13, 1919-March 18, 1920). The series begins in a fairly directionless fashion, following a similarly broad attack in “Pastiche: The Regional” months earlier. The focus of the piece is the preservation of culture, an articulation of Pound’s suggestions for nurturing and

²⁹³ Ezra Pound, “Pastiche: The Regional XV” *The New Age* XXV.27 (October 30, 1919) 448a

protecting civilization. Pound criticises the ideas of *religion* and of *nation*, the public instinct, their impenetrable nature, and immunity to 'ideas'. By the third installment, Pound's writing becomes increasingly obsessed with economic arguments, and by the seventh, he cites Douglas by name.

In Pound's words, the piece is "a mere disjointed heap of unrelated statements"²⁹⁴ that works towards a proposal for peace and the salvation of civilization; epic concerns that, until the entry of Douglasite economics, were lacking any cohesive substance. Apologising for the economic turn at the outset of "Revolt of Intelligence VII", Pound maps out a literary parallel for economics equating the relationship between 'words' and 'speech' to that of 'labour' and 'capital', arguing that as the intelligence can create poems out of words, without the necessity of speech, "labour without capital, but with enough directing intelligence to ensure necessary collaboration of adequate number of labourers, could do very well without capital."²⁹⁵ He insists that there are, or ought to be, three elements in the economic system: labour, capital, and intelligence. Intelligence, Pound proposes, is what can drive production, not the mere pursuit of profit. He cites his grandfather Thaddeus' building of railroads and the subsequent monopolistic takeover by 'Warnerhauser'(sic) as a comparison of the intelligent versus capital instincts. "He sweated blood to build that line of railroad [...] What he ever got out of it I don't know[...] I must conclude that the regard must have been very largely in the sensation of accomplishment. The typical Capitalist, Warenhauser, received, I believe, the cash benefits."²⁹⁶

Additionally, we can begin to read Pound's frustration with his own lack of utility, or at least, the lack of value either Britain or America attribute to him. This

²⁹⁴ Ezra Pound, "The Revolt of Intelligence VI" *The New Age* XXVI.11 (January 15, 1920) 177a

²⁹⁵ Ezra Pound, "The Revolt of Intelligence VII" *The New Age* XXVI.12 (January 22, 1920) 186b

²⁹⁶ Ezra Pound, "The Revolt of Intelligence VIII" *The New Age* XXVI.18 (March 4, 1920) 287a-b

spawns the ultimate development in Pound's writings in *The New Age*, a call to power. Pound addresses issues of power, having temporarily put it in the hands of the rich,²⁹⁷ and looks to a time when artists can take such positions.²⁹⁸ His frustrations in not being used in such a capacity, as an 'antennae of the race', show their face in *The New Age*. He writes, "Our immediate hopes depend upon executive intelligence, and our future hope upon the state of the sense of justice in the better minds of our time,"²⁹⁹ however, "The nations of to-day are almost as incapable of exploiting their cultivated men as were the thirteenth century nations."³⁰⁰ As an artist perched on the vortex of London in a decade of great change, violence, and vitality, Pound led art movements to successes and was convinced that he could bring great art together and spawn a new renaissance of art and letters. But the Great War showed him that his calls for peace and conversation ('both speech and attention') between nations went unheard. The artist was undervalued in the modern world: "The expatriate might have seemed the natural interpreter between [...] two nations."³⁰¹ Armed with the economic arguments of C. H. Douglas, Pound proceeded convinced that he had been right all along, that the arts had suffered unjustly in modern capitalism and these facts were confirmed for him with what he saw as the failure of the economic system to provide for its citizens.

Two decades later, Pound echoes what he had expressed in his early articles for *The New Age* when he writes about the contagious nature of diseases, the

²⁹⁷ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VII" *The New Age* XI.26 (October 24, 1912) 587b. "It is permitted us to believe that the millionaire is no more a permanent evil than was the feudal over-lord.[...] Nevertheless there seems to be no reason why he should not confer upon society, during his reign, such benefits as he is able. And the centralization of power in his hands makes it very easy for him to display a virtue if he have one."

²⁹⁸ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies" *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10a. "The arts come into prominence and there is what is called an 'age of art' when men of certain catholicity of intelligence come into power. The great protector of the arts is rare as the great artist, or more so."

²⁹⁹ Ezra Pound, "Masaryk" *The New Age* XXVI.22 (April 1, 1920) 350b

³⁰⁰ Ezra Pound, "Pastiche: The Regional XVIII" *The New Age* XXVI.1 (November 20, 1919) 48b

³⁰¹ Ezra Pound "What America Has to Live Down V" *The New Age* XXIII.20 (September 12, 1918) 314a

diseases of bad press and a bad education system he had targeted years earlier, and the economic injustice suffered by the arts in “Murder by Capital” (1933):

Twenty years ago, before ‘one’, ‘we’, ‘the present writer’ or his acquaintances had begun to think about ‘cold subjects like economics’ one began to notice that the social order hated *any* art of maximum intensity and preferred dilutions. The best artists were unemployed, they were unemployed long before, or at any rate appreciable before, the unemployment crises began to make the front page in the newspapers. Capitalist society, or whatever you choose to call the social organization of 1905-1915 was *not* getting the most out of its available artistic ‘plant’.³⁰²

The economic concern was always present, from the early days of “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” and the association of troubadour poets and modern artists as a guild or trade group in the utopian vision of society to the capitalist democracies’ failure “to provide for its best writers[...] Civilisation has got to restart.”³⁰³

Examining Pound’s decade in London we discover that the perceived ‘major change’ in Pound’s thought is not as dramatic or life-altering as many critics have proposed. Although his poetry, to be examined in the following chapters, found new metres within which to express its concerns, and new language with which to target the oppressors, Pound’s world view remained one of the virtuous versus the stupid, the oppressed among the many faces of oppression.

This is troubling to those scholars who, with varied intentions, have nurtured the idea of a tectonic shift of Pound’s state of mind. This lack of any obvious big bang moment also exposes Pound’s continuity of theme and interest even while the exact topics or examples that alight his interest change. Finally, the seemingly eternal struggle with the resistance to perceived tyrannies, intellectual oppression, individuality and the economic constraints on artists remain central to Pound’s concerns.

³⁰² Ezra Pound, “Murder by Capital”, in *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed., (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 197

³⁰³ Ezra Pound, “Credit and the Fine Arts” *The New Age* XXX.22 (March 30, 1922) 284a

These themes appear in the first writings in *The New Age* and, fifty years later, Pound still struggles with these obstacles:

It is difficult to write a paradiso when all the superficial indications are that you ought to write an apocalypse [...] I must clarify obscurities; I must make clearer definite ideas or dissociations. I must find a verbal formula to combat the rise of brutality.³⁰⁴

It is very troubling to read these confessions of an aged Pound, a man who has worked his whole life with philanthropic intentions and tireless promotion of the ideals of liberation from tyrannies while facing them and witnessing two world wars, arguably the greatest massacres in the history of civilization, all the while remaining optimistic about an awakening, a paradiso.

However, equally troubling is it to notice some of Pound's reprehensible attitudes making appearances well before the Douglas encounter. For example, we cannot ignore his social and economic interest in Jews from a very early date. In "Patria Mia" and "Through Alien Eyes" he makes inflammatory assessments of the conduct of Jewish immigrants. In spite of the effects of the climate on the nature or character of people, "the Jew alone can retain his detestable qualities."³⁰⁵ While he calls them a "wise and provident" people, he observes that they take "measures to prepare them as swiftly as possible to make their way among new surroundings, to acquire—and they do acquire—and buy up land and become rich in due season." He says that the Jewish means of training is devised "to gain advantage over the rest. Which they very obviously do."³⁰⁶ Pound's pragmatic understanding of how to get through life and be fed is envied in the successes of others. While these proclamations display a concern for how to educate a nation for future success,

³⁰⁴ Donald Hall and Ezra Pound, interview. "The Art of Poetry no.5" *Paris Review* 28 (Summer/Fall 1962) 27

³⁰⁵ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia II" *The New Age* XI.20 (September 12, 1912) 466a

³⁰⁶ Ezra Pound, "Through Alien Eyes II" *The New Age* XII.12 (January 23, 1913) 276a-b

cultural and economic successes, they also expose roots of a xenophobia and racism, albeit in a less venomous manner than after 1926.

When seen in this context, Pound seems very much a product of his circumstances. And when interpreted in the fashion of Sieburth and Nicholls, the literary mode of Pound's post-London era becomes determined by economic rather than aesthetic catalysts. However, if it were not for the existing frustration in Pound's development as both a prose and verse writer, these economic proclamations could not have had the same impact. The centrality of the Douglas factor is not debatable, but what *The New Age* writings before 1919 show is a poet at odds with a world that marginalizes the artists to do good work in corners: "Great art does not depend on the support of riches, but without such aid it will be individual, separate, and spasmodic; it will not group and become a great period. The individual artist will do fine work in corners, to be discovered after his death."³⁰⁷

Critics have worked to discover the roots of Pound's fascism, his 'roots of treason', but until all studies approach Pound with expository rather than judicial ambitions, we will struggle to understand the complexities of Pound and his place as a part of a generation that experienced significant change and unforeseen violence and come only to the simplest of conclusions: guilty or not guilty. Paul Morrison suggests that, "Pound's fascism has its origins in a profound and potentially revolutionary dissatisfaction with the liberal settlement." But Morrison goes on to say that "the anti-capitalist, anti-bourgeois terror that motivates both need not have assumed the reactionary form it did."³⁰⁸ Change was necessary, and in the pages of *The New Age* the writing of hundreds of varied professionals were juxtaposed clutching at new systems, looking to a new order, and pursuing new justice for every

³⁰⁷ Ezra Pound, "The Renaissance" *Selected Prose: 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 221

³⁰⁸ Paul Morrison, *The Poetics of Fascism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Paul de Man* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) 6

citizen. With optimism intact in spite of the reports coming back from the front lines in France, Pound asks in 1915:

Is it that real democracy can only exist under feudal conditions when no man fears to recognize creative skill in his neighbour; or, are we, as one likes to suppose, on the brink of another really great awakening, when the creative or art vortices shall be strong enough, when the people who care will be well enough organized to set the fine fashion, to impose it, to make a great age?³⁰⁹

But at the close of the First World War, with the deaths of Hulme and Gaudier-Brzeska, the poetry of *Lustra* and the prose in *The New Age*, the only obvious concrete universals appeared to be brutality and oppression. The *BLAST* of Pound and Lewis was a misfire, and to keep faith in an awakening of truth of some sort, there had to be an explanation and cure for the social ills of the early twentieth century. The tired enemies flushed out in *The New Age* contributions of magazines and academies, the industrialization of scholarship was not going to change. But the constraints on the artists, the tyrannies and oppressions keeping the vital art from the masses were fundamentally economic, and after 1919, Pound was convinced of a cure. He writes in 1919, “a man judges in accordance with the element of necessity in his own life—ie., the extent to which he is constrained by poverty, or by the terror of poverty, to do certain things he dislikes.” Douglas proposed a means by which Pound would no longer need to do what he disliked in the creation and distribution of his work. The economic need found an economic remedy.

The New Age and Douglas had instigated in Pound the belief in a central symbol of injustice and oppression that was to become the central symbol in the *Cantos*: gold. The central injustice was to become gold and not, as he had been writing, the academies breeding conformity, not the magazines making publishing decisions based on commercial interests, and not just the mechanization of production of either intellect or of industry. But the stance Pound had assumed in his

³⁰⁹ Ezra Pound, “Affirmations I” *The New Age* XVI.10 (January 7, 1915) 247b

most aggressive moments in *The New Age* was to carry over into his post-London era. The over-arching systems were corrupt and, with revolutionary language, art had to defend itself or humanity would risk losing its cultural inheritance:

After a long period in which, he said, the arts had been humanist and had tried unsuccessfully to lead and persuade an ‘unbearably stupid’ humanity, the artist had at last been aroused to the fact that the war between him and the world was a war without truce. That the only remedy, in fact, was slaughter: ‘The artist had been at peace with his oppressors long enough. He has dabbled in democracy and he is now done with that folly. We turn back, we artists, to the powers of the air, to the djinns who were our allies aforetime, to the spirits of our ancestors.’ With the connivance of these spirits the artist was ready to take over: ‘The aristocracy of entail and of title is decayed, the aristocracy of commerce is decaying, the aristocracy of the arts is ready again for its service... and we who are the heirs of the witch-doctor and the voodoo, we artists who have been so long the despised are about to take over control.’³¹⁰

Pound pursued, and eventually, if only temporarily, found in Italy what he had been calling for since *Patria Mia*, his work following his 1910 visit to America: a world where politics and aesthetics could be mutually supportive, where the artist could survive in the culture of capital. Pound saw the capitalist marketplace as an imposing instrument of amnesia, demanding that artists and intellectuals connect the past in order to bring the masses, the victims of this historical memory wiping, up to speed: “Arts work on life as history works on the development of civilization.”³¹¹ The Modernists believed they proceeded in a darkness, “living in a time when all the stage sets[...] were being struck.”³¹² America was once the potential paradise of Pound’s ambitions of an artistic awakening, but he had arrived no nearer his goal than he was ten years earlier. He was looking elsewhere for the embodiment of the poetic and economic justices he espoused in the pages of *The New Age*:

Economics and poetics alike will be underwritten by a benevolent totalitarian[...], who protects money and words, properly ligatured, from

³¹⁰ Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1970) 158

³¹¹ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973)

³¹² Frank Lentricchia, *Modernist Quartet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 236

manipulation by usurers, gun manufacturers, the fantastic international Jewish conspiracy, and other corrupters, financial and aesthetic, real and imaginary.³¹³

Pound found this totalitarian in Mussolini.

³¹³ Frank Lentricchia, Modernist Quartet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 225

CHAPTER 5

Translating Themes of Exile in *The New Age*: ‘The Seafarer’

In the previous chapters of this dissertation, Ezra Pound’s contributions to *The New Age* have been examined by exploring the personal and economic themes of exile and isolation. The fact that Pound addressed international economic and social issues regarding America and the world that are not exclusively or transparently ‘literary’ does not mean these works have no bearing on his literary position or do not take the form of literary commentary. Instead, Pound reconstituted these peripheral concerns as investigations into the institutions that constitute literature as a field of cultural production. As Litz and Rainey have observed, Pound had a

keen capacity to see how the conflicting imperatives that guided authors, publishers, patrons, editors, readers, book-dealers, and collectors could overlap or converge in ways that might permit the construction of alternative institutional structures, fragile and yet functional, in which the work of modernism could get done.³¹⁴

This ideal creative environment was manifested in the weekly convergence of genius in the pages of *The New Age* where the political was literary, and the literary, visionary.

Pound can be simultaneously concerned with economics when he discusses literature, and likewise engaged with the issues of literature when he is discussing economics. “A work of art, any serious work,” he argued, “vivifies a man’s total perception of relations.”³¹⁵ His method of ‘luminous detail’, the precursor to the ‘ideogrammatic method’ exemplified this interrelation: “Certain facts give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into

³¹⁴A. Walton Litz and Lawrence Rainey, “Ezra Pound”, in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, Vol. VII (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 58

³¹⁵ Ezra Pound in Ezra Pound, *Selected Prose: 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973)

sequence, and law.”³¹⁶ For these reasons, Pound’s writings in *The New Age*, especially those that are not overtly literary, are resources demanding scholarly attention. Within their paragraphs can be read fragments of Pound’s genius, vivid and passionate expressions of his developing artistic ideologies as he engaged with the crises of his time. These prose writings offer us an invaluable self-portrait of Pound’s developing worldview as he attempted to “bring poetry up to the level of prose,”³¹⁷ repairing the rifts between prose and poetry to which Ford Madox Hueffer had called his attention, between the aesthete artist and the socially and politically engaged poet/critic. Further, the poems he chose to publish in the journal’s pages can be seen as samples of his views in practice, his attempts at offering artistic solutions to the puzzles presented by the aesthetic and social issues he addressed in the 1910s. Read within the context of their corresponding prose, these poems expose the conflicting nature of Pound’s developing worldview as he absorbed the intellectual influences of London, the inspirations of Yeats, Hulme, Hueffer, Orage and *The New Age* circle, and the emotional and psychological effect of the Great War while attempting to remedy satisfactorily the poetry/prose, art/life divide.

Editing a collection is a challenge for any editor and the reader is always left to ask, “Why is one piece included and another, not?” In the case of Ezra Pound, the act of selecting representative poems is a very particular challenge, especially for a poet like Pound who released seventeen collections of his work (including *Spirit of Romance*, *Des Imagistes* and *BLAST 1* and *BLAST 2*) between 1908 and 1920 and experimented with such diverse forms and languages through “importation of models.”³¹⁸ But additionally, with a poet as outspoken, ideologically challenging and politically controversial as Pound, there is always the possibility of a political

³¹⁶ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130a

³¹⁷ Ezra Pound *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* (New York: New Directions, 1970) 83

³¹⁸ Ezra Pound “The Renaissance” *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 214

influence on the decisions made by any editor. Two things are immediately noticeable to the student of Pound's critical writings when examining the contents of T. S. Eliot's collection, Literary Essays of Ezra Pound: Pound's work on the arts more generally are not included (music, sculpture, etc.), and his earliest lengthy piece of literary criticism is also notably absent. With regards to the extra-literary arts, the exclusion of writing on Epstein or Gaudier-Brzeska is perhaps justified by the collection being called the 'Literary Essays', but there is much to gain in the understanding of Pound's literary perspective when we observe the consistency, or at least, incremental development of his aesthetic views through his discussions of the arts of sculpture and music. While it could be argued that many of the ideas Pound introduced in 'I Gather the Limbs of Osiris' are expressed in a more developed form in later pieces, Eliot's exclusion of his earliest lengthy commentary on literature requires a more intensive examination.

In the introduction to his collection, Eliot stated that he had chosen not to include The Spirit of Romance(1910) because it is already in a new edition from New Directions. His choice to exclude "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"(1911) is also significant. Eliot did mention that Pound did not approve of every selection so perhaps we can assume the two disagreed and Pound thought "Limbs" should be included. But Eliot also wrote, "Other papers which he would have liked me to include struck me as being outside the frame of a volume entitled 'Literary Essays'." This judgement certainly cannot apply to "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris". It must also be noted that twenty years later when William Cookson edited a collection of Pound's prose, he included the piece as the first essay in the collection. In his explanation of why it is included he does not offer any clues as to why it might have been excluded from Eliot's collection. Cookson wrote:

Pound's perennial conception of the function of literature is clearly stated:

"If a book reveal to us something of which we are unconscious, it feeds us with its energy..." "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" also contains the germ of the idea of 'tradition' that Eliot later develops in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. It shows that Pound was rooted from the first in the poetry with which the *Cantos* now forms part of a living tradition—the work of Homer, Dante, Chaucer, Villon, and Shakspeare[sic].³¹⁹

Cookson's reference to "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is a pertinent comparison as "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" is as much a seminal prose piece for Pound as "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is for Eliot. Without some justification, to exclude "Tradition..." from a collection of Eliot's literary essays would be a major editorial oversight. Therefore Eliot's exclusion of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" elicits no minor suspicion. The editor could relate to a potential discontinuity of thought from Pound's early prose piece to his later and more clearly articulated later pronouncements. Eliot himself underwent such changes and refinements allowing readers to see his work as *before* religious conversion and *after*. In this distinction it can be said that there are three parts, and that "Tradition" is seen as the start of the second/middle phase of Eliot (1919-1927) after the despair and skepticism of 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' and 'The Hollow Men'. The final stage comes when he turned to moral and religious influences to inform his literature. Ronald Schuchard writes, "Eliot not only sins against literature by employing his dogmatic religious beliefs as the narrow touchstone of his criticism but yearns nostalgically for the unified sensibility and moral security of a lost medieval world."³²⁰

While an examination of Eliot's motives and aesthetic practices is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worthwhile to investigate what it was about "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" that Eliot decided was redundant or unnecessary to include in the *Literary Essays*. Additionally, it is unclear why Cookson, while including the

³¹⁹ William Cookson, ed. *Selected Prose 1909-1965: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973) 8

³²⁰ Ronald Schuchard, *Eliot's Dark Angel: Intersections of Life and Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 52

series Eliot had omitted, re-printed an edition of “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” that excludes the poems Pound included in his publication of the series in *The New Age*. The poems are an integral part of Pound’s presentation of his argument in “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” and contribute as many of the arguments of the article as the prose does.

Although these two chapters, Chapter Five and Chapter Six, will not address these questions directly, they have pointed to the necessity for further exploration of Pound’s aesthetic arguments as presented in *The New Age*, whether in social commentary pieces or pieces that are more explicitly ‘literary’. Further, these questions call for a focused examination of Pound’s first lengthy piece for *The New Age*, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” and the poem that began the series, ‘The Seafarer’.

The readings of this chapter engage with an obviously conflicted Pound, a complicated figure openly grappling with the conditions of modernity that see art existing without the benefit of patronage, the support of artists that was a desired and necessary circumstance if the Risorgimento was to be realized. Thus, art itself is subject to public whim via the restrictive conditions of print media. The integration of art and life that became a necessity with the commodification of art in modernity saw Pound fuse his aesthetic and social perspectives in the changes he believed, and professed in *The New Age*, that all good art must undergo to create a vital contemporary artistic expression. Through reading Pound’s varied perspectives on art and society in the pages of *The New Age* this chapter will also develop upon Chapter Two’s argument of the persona of the alien-in-London aesthete to which, as critics have suggested, he bid farewell in “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley”. Through an examination of two of his significant but arguably under-studied translations, one at each end of the decade, it will suggest that Pound’s dilemma of finding a balance

between aesthetic autonomy and social engagement reached an artistic crisis in the pages of *The New Age*. N. Christoph de Nagy has called this period of production the 'critical decade', and based on sheer volume of production, the description is appropriate and accurate. It is between 1911 and 1922 that Pound became a literary critic. So in order to gain an understanding of Pound's critical position upon leaving London, we must examine his criticism as it appeared in the pages of *The New Age*.

"I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" was Pound's first significant prose contribution to *The New Age*. It was published in twelve parts between Nov 1911 and February 1912 and was his first long piece of criticism since Spirit of Romance (1910). The Spirit of Romance was the result of lectures³²¹ Pound gave at the London Polytechnic from 1909 on aspects of 'The Development of Literature in Southern Europe' with lectures on Camoens, the troubadours, Cervantes, Villon, Cavalcanti and Dante. With the help of Ernest Rhys, it was promised that J.M. Dent would publish the lectures as a book. Humphrey Carpenter tells us that Pound complained to his mother about the amount of work it would take to complete the Spirit of Romance lectures:

'You know I have never made any pretense of loving labour or believing in its dignity. I never voluntarily do anything but write lyrics & talk to my friends.' He admitted that he might quite enjoy composing music, 'if I were not tone deaf', or painting or sculpture 'if I were not so damned clumsy.'³²²

So the act of writing prose, from the beginning, did not come easily to Pound.

"I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" marks the beginning of Pound's self-fashioned role as an assistant in the rebirth of poetry, albeit in a method he had not yet come to terms with, that of formal prose. However his ambitions were made quite clear by the choice of title for the series; its referent emphasizes the value

³²¹ "I am to give 21 be d---d lectures for the Polytec. & I wish I wuz ded." Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, A Serious Character (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 124

³²² Pound in Carpenter, A Serious Character. 124

Pound placed on ‘discovering’ and determining worth or value. Isis gathered the dismembered limbs of Osiris, her dead brother, whose consequent rebirth was the legendary basis of an Egyptian fertility ritual. Upon his rebirth, Osiris became the Judge of the Dead, “and Pound with his capacity for taking in all the world’s myths pictured himself as one who could, like Isis, restore life to the dead.”³²³ By identifying himself with Isis, Pound takes the role of the protector of the genius of Osiris, bringer of civilization to other nations. “He was declaring his ambition to recover and renew the vital principle of his civilization, to be its Isis.”³²⁴ The title reveals an ambition to bring lesser-known creative talents to a wider audience through his poems and translations, thereby instigating in the process new and fertile ground for the rebirth of letters and a renaissance of English poetry. Further, the audience, ie. readers of *The New Age* would have understood this pronouncement. A. David Moody explains the title in terms of a conscious decision on Pound’s part to announce his genius:

Any readers of the review [*The New Age*] who were keeping up with Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*—the volumes entitled *Adonis*, *Attis*, *Osiris* had recently appeared—would have seen that to say ‘I gather the limbs of Osiris’ was as much as to claim, ‘I am Isis gathering up and reanimating the buried fragments of civilization’. For Osiris has taught Egypt to grow grain and make bread; then to live in towns, to institute laws, and to worship gods. Afterwards he carried the gifts of civilization abroad into other nations. But his antagonists in Egypt murdered him, cut up his body and scattered the parts; whereupon Isis collected together the scattered parts and by her magical powers restored Osiris, to ensure that his genius would be always at work in the world.³²⁵

The series introduces many of the major themes that are sustained and developed in his prose writings over the decade. But most importantly, the exchanges Pound makes between people and ideas through his connection with *The New Age*

³²³ William Pratt, ed. *Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth* (AMS Press: New York, 2002) 7

³²⁴ A. David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 169

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 169

exemplifies his propensity for borrowing ideas, language and personae from the past and present alike, discriminating the ‘luminous details’, making them his own, and making them new. Acknowledging his own adoption of archaisms in his early poetry, Pound insists that poets must borrow from the best periods if they are going to borrow archaism at all, not ones “out of the stupidest and worst-dressed periods.”³²⁶ “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” is, as Pound announces in its opening lines, an explication of a “New Method in Scholarship.” We learn that this method is of ‘luminous detail’, a method that, at its core, has to do with ‘facts’.

In “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”, Pound sets up an opposition between the reticent and the demonstrative, that which tells us nothing we did not know and that which enlightens us. He explains that the well-presented fact enlightens us, tells us more than we already know, and he calls this ‘interpreting detail’. “Facts of this nature give us intelligence of the period—a kind of intelligence not to be gathered from a great array of facts of the other sort.”³²⁷ Pound writes, “we have in certain matters Accuracy of Sentiment” that speak to us with their enlightened meaning, not by their literal expression (‘mobile’), but by what is implied or understood (‘wireless cellular telephone’). So the audience must be familiar with the interpreting detail, or risk missing the enlightened meaning.

As discussed in terms of his personal journey as exile and his relationship to economics in previous chapters, Pound’s focused literary mission in his early years in London is to explain the value of the arts of past ages in an attempt to bring about a new age of vital art. Orage, himself convinced “that to achieve social justice it was necessary to bring about a ‘new contemplative and imaginative order’ which would ‘co-operate with the purposes of art,’”³²⁸ enlisted Pound’s services. The illuminations

³²⁶ Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 15

³²⁷ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris II” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130b

³²⁸ A David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 160

of 'facts' as explained in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" "govern knowledge as the switchboard governs an electric circuit."³²⁹ The result would be that one would need to "read less, far less than we do" and Pound, as Isis, seemingly accepts the role of discovering the facts that "give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law."³³⁰

In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" Pound directed our reading to texts from the various stages of the development of the poetic art. He proposed that reading the works of different ages "may fill us with a sense of our ignorance of the laws of the art in accordance with which they are written. The fact that every masterpiece contains its law within itself, self-sufficing to itself, does not simplify the solution."³³¹ Pound announced an intention to discuss the 'laws of art' by studying the various stages of art in history. To approach these texts, Pound proposed the use of a 'new method', one based upon "Luminous Detail," to understand the stages by which art has grown from what it *was* to what it *is*. To this end, Pound discussed the 'luminous details' of art and artists, the sources of energy made dynamic in masterpieces. He distinguished between the 'donative' and 'symptomatic' works and authors, the former being the sort of art Pound would hope to create and the type of artist he would like to be. The donative artist is one who "seems to draw down in to the art something which was not in the art of his predecessors."³³²

The poet must discriminate, as Pound told us Arnaut did. Arnaut, Pound wrote, re-invented style: "he conceived, that is, a manner of writing in which each word should bear some burden, should make some special contribution to the effect of the whole. The poem is an organism in which each part functionates, gives to

³²⁹ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction" *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130b

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IV: A Beginning" *The New Age* X.8 (December 21, 1911) 179a

³³² Ibid.

sound or to sense something—preferably to sound *and* sense gives something.”³³³

Cavalcanti’s poetry, meanwhile:

Is interesting, apart from its beauty, for his exact psychology, for an attempt to render emotions precisely; emotions, uncommon, perhaps, save in a land of sun, where the soul and the senses are joined in a union different, may be, from that which occurs in other countries [...] His mind was in a way the matrix against which the mind of the young Dante formed itself.³³⁴

Pound expressed the need for efficiency in addressing the public on matters of art. “When it comes to presenting the matter to the public, to the intelligent, over-busy public, *bonae voluntatis*, there are certain forms of civility, consideration, and efficiency to be considered.”³³⁵ Even before the formulation of his Imagist doctrine that urges the poet to “go in fear of abstractions”, Pound is concerned with precision and accuracy of sentiment; to borrow Herbert Schneidau’s phrase, Pound is seeking to discover the “precisely presented particular.” As Pound observed, “The arts are, when they are healthy, succinct,”³³⁶ and, in translations of Cavalcanti in “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”, he praised the artist “who makes the air one trembling clarity”, and celebrated accuracy of representation with the line, “her fair semblance that is clear and holy.”³³⁷

For Pound, these elements of clarity, precision and accuracy of sentiment, created a powerful art. Ideas like ‘invention’ or ‘inspiration’ are absent from Pound’s descriptions of what the artist must do. Instead, his focus is on the ‘precision’ and ‘accurate sentiment’, the gathering of latent energy to a particular purpose while breathing new life, as it were, into the work of his predecessors:

³³³ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IV: A Beginning” *The New Age* X.8 (December 21, 1911) 179b

³³⁴ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris III: Guido Cavalcanti” *The New Age* X.7 (December 14, 1911) 155a

³³⁵ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130a

³³⁶ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies I” *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

³³⁷ Ezra Pound, Sonnet VII and XXXV, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris III: Guido Cavalcanti” *The New Age* (December 14, 1911) 155a

The interpretative function is the highest honor of the arts, and because it is so we find that a sort of hyper-scientific precision is the touchstone and assay of the artist's power, of his honor, his authenticity. Constantly he must distinguish between the shades and the degrees of the ineffable.³³⁸

The treatment of subject and matter with precision treats them as parts of a working mechanism that can create powerful and vital art, not just a poetic product, but a poetic *experience*: "They all 'produce power'—that is, they all gather the latent energy Nature and focus it on a certain resistance. The latent energy is made dynamic or 'revealed' to the engineer in control, and placed at his disposal."³³⁹ The artist "discovers, or, better, 'he discriminates'."³⁴⁰ These emphases on discrimination, precision and accuracy, reflect Pound's belief in a poetic responsibility as controlled 'engineer' of the creative act rather than a passive, subjective one awaiting 'inspiration' and, in the words of Thomas H. Jackson, "tend to place the poetic experience rather than the creative act at the core of artistic production."³⁴¹

The notion of an engineer in charge of forces and currents was not original in *The New Age*. These ideas of the donative quality in the arts, discrimination and precision in the creation of a powerful art, echo the prose of A.R. Orage when he wrote about Nietzsche in 1906:

Every organism, whether an individual, a people or a race, belongs either to an ascending or a descending current. And its morality, art, form of society, instinct, and in fact its whole mode of manifestation, depend on whether it belongs to one of the other order of being. The primary characteristic of the ascending life is the consciousness of inexhaustible power. The individual or people behind which the flowing tide of life-force moves is creative, generous, reckless, enthusiastic, prodigal, passionate: its virtues, be it observed, are Dionysian. Its will-to-power is vigorous; in energy it finds delight. And the moral code of such a people will reflect faithfully the people's power.

But the prevailing characteristic of the descending life is the consciousness of *declining* power. The individual or people in whom the life-

³³⁸ Ezra Pound, "Psychology and Troubadours" *The Spirit of Romance* (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1910, revised 1952) 87

³³⁹ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IV: A Beginning" *The New Age* X.8 (December 21, 1911) 178b-179a

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 179a

³⁴¹ Thomas H. Jackson, *The Early Poetry of Ezra Pound* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) 31

force is ebbing instinctively husband their resources. They are preservative rather than creative, niggardly, careful, fearful of passion and excess, calculating and moderate. And, in turn, their code of morality faithfully reflects their will.³⁴²

Years after Orage originally wrote these lines, Pound announced his own understanding of the arts, morality and society as an organism. The notion of currents that either give or hoard power finds its way into “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” in the form of the ‘donative artist’, the artist that gives something new, the artist who “seems to draw down in to the art something which was not in the art of his predecessors.”³⁴³ What Pound described as the English/American ‘keynote’ can be read in “Patria Mia” where he attributed carelessness, looseness, and generosity to the people of both countries. He finds “a hatred of the sordid, an ability to forget the part for the sake of the whole, a desire for largeness, a willingness to stand exposed.”³⁴⁴ America possessed Orage’s *ascending current* in what Pound called ‘the idealist’, and the descending can be found in ‘the materialist.’ This binary, we will see, is central to Pound’s presentation of ‘The Seafarer’.

Right at the outset, the “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” series also introduces a style to which we are to become accustomed in reading Pound when he wrote, “bear with me a little; let me write a few pages of commonplace, of things which we all know and upon which we for the most part agree, and if you endure to the end of them you will know upon what section of our common knowledge I am to build the airy fabric of my heresies.”³⁴⁵ We see Pound the self-reflexive thinker who actively acknowledges the sometimes disorganised display of his ideas, a technique that actively involves the reader. Pound also actively involved the readers of his poetry in a similar fashion by addressing them directly or through a projected mask. This very

³⁴² A.R.Orage in Leon Surette, *Pound in Puragatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 50-1

³⁴³ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IV: A Beginning” *The New Age* X.8 (December 21, 1911) 179a

³⁴⁴ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia XI” *The New Age* XII.2 (November 14, 1912) 33b

³⁴⁵ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130a

Poundian feature in his prose endures from “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”(1911) to Guide To Kulchur(1938) and is a defining feature of his poetry. This tendency to directly and indirectly address the reader in Pound’s prose can be understood as symptoms of a poet who was uncomfortable writing critical prose, or indicative of the busy pace of Pound’s prolific prose outpourings in the 1910s. But these statements also reveal a consciousness of his own method of piling up facts and images, a habit that is to become one of his key poetic traits.

Pound claims that he has tried to illuminate our understanding of certain eras of art, to “clear up a certain messy place”, particularly the ages of Villon, Lope de Vega, Cavalcanti and Arnaut Daniel. He has adopted elements of their work into his own “to make our sentiment of it more accurate.” This was motivated by his passionate attempts to make accessible literatures of the past and of different languages and cultures. By doing so, Pound believed the works would be alive, once again, and vital in a new age or new tongue. Pound has hung “a gallery of photographs, of perhaps not very good photographs, but of the best I can lay hold of” in pursuit of his cultural goals. He tried this with Anglo-Saxon as well, and a translation of ‘The Seafarer’ began the “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” series. His hope, as he saw it, was “to be of service to the living art” by compelling readers to examine these past traditions and illuminating their present relevance.

Pound’s strongly held belief in the importance of literature goes beyond the merely aesthetic realm. His literary concerns contribute to a broader artistic ideology, an ideology that becomes increasingly bound to his developing ideas concerning economics and society, an ideology occupied with “the running of ‘things at large.’”³⁴⁶ For Pound, “letters are a nation’s foreign office”³⁴⁷ and as an exiled American artist, he was on the front line of international cultural and political affairs.

³⁴⁶ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VI” *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564a

³⁴⁷ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia IV” *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516b

He did not see the artist's role as peripheral; rather the artist had a vital role to play in society: "We need the old feud between the artist and the smuggler portions of the community revived with some virulence for the welfare of things at large,"³⁴⁸ he argued, echoing once more an Oragean sentiment where the ascending, Dionysian virtue, is a vigorous creative "will-to-power." The arts cannot only be some aesthetic pursuit of beauty and self-expression; they must be moral, precise, and engaging to be 'vital': "The Arts work on life as history works on the development of civilisation and literature."³⁴⁹ Indeed, to borrow Donald Davie's analogy, Pound works on the arts as a sculptor works on marble. This can be seen most clearly in his works of translation.

In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", Pound attempts to exemplify the 'new method in scholarship', that of of Luminous Detail, by creating out of literary landmarks of the past his own translations of 'The Seafarer', poems of Guido Cavalcanti, and some canzoni and early poems of Arnaut Daniel. His technique focuses much more on the translation of *sound* and of *sense* than on the translation of *literal meanings*. While his lexical and grammatical choices do not necessarily create the most eloquent poetry, his editorial if not ideological intentions are relatively clear. Additionally, in the lines of Pound's version of the poem, his 'new method' can be seen in practice. He wrote, "The artist seeks out the luminous detail and presents it. He does not comment."³⁵⁰ This lack of comment can, at times, be puzzling, but it does demand an active engagement between the reader and the text. This new method displays an early Poundian tendency towards what will come to be known as a modernist trait of aesthetic autonomy where the poem, or art object, exists in its autonomous beauty, neither explained nor contextualized for the reader

³⁴⁸ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia V" *The New Age* XI.23 (October 3, 1912) 540a

³⁴⁹ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies I" *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10b

³⁵⁰ Ezra Pound "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris II: a Rather Dull Introduction" *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130b

or audience. The shifts between explication and exposition, the entries in the series alternating between his prose and his translations of the luminous works of the past, allow the reader not only to read what Pound *says* but what he *does*. Pound used this approach years later when he published ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ (to be examined later) in *The New Age* in alternating juxtaposition to “Pastiche: The Regional”.

His translations function as testimonies to what he saw as the true meanings of the works at hand. In particular, ‘The Seafarer’ is chosen to illuminate both Pound’s technical use and philosophical use of his new method. The conflicts in aspect of Pound’s literary agenda are already apparent; a collective of determined individuals, emotionally charged objectivity, technique that should precisely render the impulse³⁵¹ are all concepts that Pound attempts to deal with in the pages of *The New Age*:

The force of a work of art is this, namely, that the artist presents his case, as fully or as minutely as he may choose. You may agree or disagree, but you cannot refute him. He is not to be drawn into arguments or weakened by quibbling. If his art is bad you can throw him out of court on grounds of his very technique. Whether he be ‘idealist’ or ‘realist,’ whether he sing or paint or carve, visible actualities as they appear, or the invisible dream, bad technique is ‘bearing false witness.’³⁵²

Again, for Pound the objective presentation was key, but it must be charged with emotion, this is the method that creates vital art illuminated by precise details: “The artistic statement of a man is not his statement of the detached and theoretic part of himself, but of his will and of his emotions.”³⁵³

Pound set out with the deliberate intention of creating a notable work of poetry that will exemplify the tenets of his artistic propaganda as well as his technical instructions. These “expositions and translations in illustration of the New

³⁵¹ Ezra Pound, “A Retrospect” *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954)

³⁵² Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies I” *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10a-b

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 10b

Method in Scholarship” seem to illustrate degrees of ironic self-criticism. For many readers, Pound’s ‘The Seafarer’ fails on technical grounds, and by Pound’s own assessment, ought to be dismissed for “bearing false witness.” But must Pound be “more interested in the poetry which I write myself than in ‘fine poetry as a whole?’”³⁵⁴ He is certainly more interested in the latter, as he asks in a letter to Harriet Monroe in 1913: “Who will stand for a level of criticism even when it throws out most of their own work?”³⁵⁵ There is also an irony in reading the instructions of a poet who, it could be argued, had not yet produced “a notable work in poetry.”³⁵⁶ The importance of the “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” series is then extremely personal for Pound as it is his early chance to set the standards by which all poetry, his own included, is to be judged. In his publications in *The New Age* we witness Pound trying to keep his poetry up to speed with his prose pronouncements. So, the question becomes, in Pound’s words, “Does his work present effectively? Does it comply to the laws inherent in itself? Does the manner fit close the matter?”³⁵⁷

Although Pound experimented with the styles of writers such as Arnaut Daniel, Li Po, Homer, and Browning throughout his transition from “late symbolist singer of the erotic sublime and [...] Imagist satirist of the modern world,”³⁵⁸ he announced his presence in *The New Age* with a translation of Anglo-Saxon lyric poetry. Pound “sought in Anglo-Saxon a certain element which has transmuted the various qualities of poetry which have drifted up from the south, which has

³⁵⁴ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 131a

³⁵⁵ Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950) 15

³⁵⁶ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia V” *The New Age* XI.23, (October 3, 1912) 539b. “Learn what technical excellence you can from a direct study of the masters, and pay no attention to the suggestion of anyone who has not himself produced a notable work in poetry[.]” Also in “A Retrospect” *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 4: “Pay no attention to the criticism of men who have never themselves written a notable work.”

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 540a

³⁵⁸ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 21

sometimes enriched and made them English, sometimes rejected them, and refused combination.”³⁵⁹ This adoption of “various qualities of poetry” can be seen as part of a wider cultural adoption of the seafaring life brought to England by the Anglo-Saxons: “Ever since the Anglo-Saxons migrated by ship from the Continent to the isle of Britain, Englishmen seem to have been more aware than most people of the importance and fascination of the sea and seafaring.”³⁶⁰ Pound noted this connection in ‘The Seafarer’. He writes:

I have found in ‘The Seafarer’ and ‘The Wanderer’ trace [sic] of what I should call the English national chemical. In those early Anglo-Saxon poems I find expression of that quality which seems to me to have transformed the successive arts of poetry that have been brought to England from the South.³⁶¹

The decision to begin the series with this poem of particularly English relevance is then a conscious choice in a patriotic English periodical.

‘The Seafarer’ can, of course, be read in a number of different ways. R.K. Gordon writes that it is:

A dialogue in which an old sailor tells of the lonely sufferings of life at sea, and is answered by a youth who urges that it is the hardness of the life which makes it attractive. The poem, however, may be a monologue in which the speaker tells of his sufferings, but also admits the fascination of the sea. The mood of contempt for the luxuries of land and his yearning to set forth on the journey leads him to think of the future life and the fleeting nature of earthly pomps and joys.³⁶²

Mitchell and Robinson, meanwhile, read the poem as a monologue that addresses the “impermanence of earthly riches and worldly fame and the importance of fixing one’s attention on the world to come, where judgment will be severe and the rewards will be lasting.”³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 131a

³⁶⁰ Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, eds. *A Guide to Old English* 5th Ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) 276

³⁶¹ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia XI” *The New Age* XII.2 (November 14, 1912) 33b

³⁶² R.K. Gordon, ed. *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (J.M. Dent and Sons: London, 1926) 76

³⁶³ Mitchell and Robinson, eds. *A Guide to Old English*. 276

In his translation, Pound chose to present the poem as a monologue, a form in which he had much practice. His first collection, *A Lume Spento* (1908), contained several Browning-esque dramatic monologues like 'La Fraisine', 'Sestina: Altaforte' and others where the Browning masks helped to give voices to Pound's speakers. In the earlier collection, Pound entered the worlds of past literatures by adopting the first person masks or 'personae', a term that would become the title of his 1909 collection. When 'The Seafarer' appeared in 1911, there was already an emerging tradition in Pound's poetry of engaging a literary continuity with the past by "raising the dead." Pound was attracted to this mode of thought because he believed that the myths and cultural histories of civilization contain "the fundamental revelations that define particular cultures, as records of the psychic experiences of the most perceptive and intelligent minds. Cultures are understood as the aggregations of the insights of artists."³⁶⁴ Additionally, the central theme of exile offered many parallels for Pound as the disenfranchised artist, the alienated artist in society. For the Anglo-Saxons, sense of community was strong, with loyalty to kin being honourable and of utmost importance: "The worst misery was exile, separation from the community." But where 'The Wanderer' is aimless and lost without his kin, 'The Seafarer' chooses his exile "voluntarily as a pilgrimage on the sea."³⁶⁵ This theme would certainly have had resonance with Pound and his own sense of exile, but without the Christian element of pilgrimage found in the original version surviving into Pound's version, the exile must adopt a slightly different motivating pursuit.

'The Seafarer' is a short elegy contained within *The Exeter Book*, a book that was presented to Exeter Cathedral by its first bishop, Leofric, not later than 1072,³⁶⁶ and is often classed as a 'Christian', as opposed to 'heroic', Anglo-Saxon poem.

³⁶⁴ Leon Surette, Leon Surette, *Pound in Puragatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 47

³⁶⁵ Alexandra H. Olsen and Burton Raffel, eds. *Poems and Prose from the Old English* (London, Yale University Press, 1998) xiii

³⁶⁶ Ida Gordon, ed. *The Seafarer* (University of Exeter Press: Exeter, 1979) 1

Indeed, Pound's 'translation' calls attention to the dilemma in the categorization of the poem in his apparent treatment of it as a dramatic monologue. By carefully 'mis'-translating certain words in the text and completely excluding the last 24 lines of the poem, Pound's translation challenges the status of 'The Seafarer' as 'Christian' lyric, and indeed, *makes it new*.

Pound presented 'The Seafarer' in separate parts, as he explained in his philological note that appeared as a postscript to the original publication in *The New Age*. "The 'lyric,' as I have accepted it," he relates, "divides fairly well into 'The Trials of the Sea,' its Lure and the Lament for Age." He acknowledges his 'de-baptising' of the poem, expressing an awareness of the scholarly assessment that the poem was likely 'baptised' by Cædmon and can be seen "as a Christian reworking of a pagan poem."³⁶⁷ The poem, Pound wrote, "fell into the hands of a monk with literary ambitions, who filled in the gaps with his own guesses and 'improvements.'"³⁶⁸ In his attempt to breathe new life into the poem, then, the Christian themes would be translated out. The illuminated details would have to be excavated by Pound to get to the vital life of the original text. In so doing, Pound attracted criticism of his accuracy of translation.

In "The Might of the North"³⁶⁹, Anglo-Saxon scholar Fred C. Robinson addressed detractors of Pound's translation and made a case for Pound's translation decisions being justified and "inventive within the limits of what he took to be faithful, philological translation," while supporting Pound's exclusion of the Christian element as consistent with scholarly interpretation. Since the first appearance of Pound's 'The Seafarer', debate about the accuracy of his translation has been frequent, varied, and ultimately exhausted. Nonetheless, for the purposes of

³⁶⁷ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1995) 310

³⁶⁸ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris I: The Seafarer" *The New Age* X.5 (November 30, 1911) 107b

³⁶⁹ Fred C. Robinson, "The Might of the North: Pound's Anglo-Saxon Studies and 'The Seafarer'" *The Yale Review* 71(1981-82) 199-224

this dissertation, an analysis of some elements of Pound's translation of 'The Seafarer' are of crucial importance because the poem was included as a part of a series that intended to display what he called a 'New Method' in scholarship. Additionally, a translation (or *version*) of "The Seafarer" acquired a very particular meaning by appearing in the pages of an Edwardian Socialist magazine. It was to become a poem praised by A.R. Orage, a Guild Socialist and literary and artistic critic in his own right. As Lee Garver observes, "It cannot be overestimated to what extent the poem laid the foundation for Pound's long and fruitful friendship with his editor, a friendship that would persist until Orage's death."³⁷⁰

Upon first encountering Pound's 'The Seafarer', the initial question that confronts us is why would Pound choose to translate an Anglo-Saxon early Christian lyric poem? The simple answer is that he did not. The poem is not a translation but a re-working of the original text to include and highlight Pound's particular personal, economic, and literary perspectives. In this sense Pound's version of 'The Seafarer' has a very particular resonance with his contemporary world.

As John Tytell writes in Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano, Pound believed that poetry "needed a constant change of manner if it was to live."³⁷¹ It has been observed that Pound believed in *illuminating details* in 'vital' texts from the past and his unique form of translation transmits some of those 'luminous details' for the modern reader. But for Pound to feature this poem in his first lengthy prose contribution to *The New Age*, "a gadfly publication,"³⁷² demanded that the poem be read in a way that works to interpret why he made such a decision.

Pound is not interested in a literal translation; his poem must capture the ideas within the Anglo-Saxon version, refract them in modern English, and make

³⁷⁰ Lee Garver, "Seafarer Socialism: Pound, The New Age, and Anglo-Medieval Radicalism" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29.4 (Summer 2006) 3

³⁷¹ John Tytell, Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano (Bloomsbury Publishing: London, 1987) 4

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 5

them relevant, precise, and current. Additionally, as will be observed, Pound tried very hard to maintain the alliterative elements of the original Anglo-Saxon while making translation decisions that would facilitate the recreation of the original verse-movement of the text “approximating its sound-effects and alliterative stress patterns.”³⁷³ With ‘The Seafarer’, this was accomplished with a trick of translation, called inaccuracy by some critics, where Pound inserted a patriotic ‘soul’ in the poem in place of the original spiritual or religious one. Pound excluded the last section of the poem, “the passage about the soul.”³⁷⁴ However, as will be shown, his reworking of passages with key Anglo-Saxon elements of *wyrd*, *dom*, and *lof*, clearly shows the poem’s Anglicisation in Pound’s hands.

The heroes of Anglo-Saxon poetry “sought *dom* ‘glory, reputation, fame’ or what the poet of *The Seafarer* calls *æftercwependra // lof lifgendra* ‘the praise of men who live to speak after [them].’”³⁷⁵ The concepts of *dom* and *lof* were modified by Christianity and although the definitions are hard to solidify, Mitchell informs us, “the greatest editor of *Beowulf*, assigns ‘glory’ as one meaning of *dom*—others include ‘judgement’ and ‘choice’—and glosses *lof* as ‘praise, glory’, to which the Wrenn-Bolton edition adds ‘fame’”. Mitchell goes on to say that “*Lof* is spectacularly baptized in *The Seafarer*.”³⁷⁶ This ‘baptism’ did not go unnoticed by Pound.

And for this, every earl whatever, for those speaking after—
 Laud of the living, boasteth some last word,
 That he will work ere he pass onward,
 Frame on the fair earth ‘gainst foes his malice,
 Daring ado, ...
 So that all men shall honour him after
 And his laud beyond them remain ‘mid the English,
 Aye, for ever, a lasting life’s blast,

³⁷³ Ming Xie, “Pound as translator” *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound* Ira Nadel, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 207

³⁷⁴ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris I: The Seafarer” *The New Age* X.5 (November 30, 1911) 107b

³⁷⁵ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 202

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 246-8

Delight mid the doughty.
(‘The Seafarer’, ll.74-82)³⁷⁷

For *lof*, Pound chose the word ‘laud’ in lines 75 and 80, a word that captures the meanings of both ‘praise’ and ‘glory’ without the potency of religious association. In Pound’s rendering, the judgment or praise is “mid the doughty” or the capable, not of the angels promising an eternal life in heaven. Line 78 in the original (80 in Pound’s version) reads “ond his lof sippan / lifge mid englum”. These lines have been translated as “his lof will afterwards live among the angels”,³⁷⁸ and “and his praise live afterwards among the angels”,³⁷⁹. In Pound, this line becomes “And his laud beyond them remain ‘mid the English”. While Pound continued his adoption of the sound of the original he also changed the sense of the original. *Lof* becomes ‘laud’, just as *wrecan* became ‘reckon’, *bitre breostceare* ‘bitter breast-cares’, and *ceole* ‘keel’. But here Pound also altered the sense of the original by reading *englum* as Angles, or ‘the English’. Further, Pound omitted “deofle togeanes”(against the enmity of devils) in line 76b after what he translated as “daring ado”, hence the elipses and thus “both devils and angels vanish from the poem.”³⁸⁰ This translation creates a new narrative in the poem of particular relevance to the inclusion of this piece in a journal like *The New Age*. The seafaring life resonates with an island nation and the impermanence of ‘lords’ and ‘earthen riches’ made an appeal to *The New Age* sensibility. Critics have noted this contextual relevance.

Lee Garver reads ‘The Seafarer’ as a powerful anti-capitalist, pro-labour poem that gave voice to the beliefs and values of the Anglo-medieval socialists in *The New Age* circle. He argues that

³⁷⁷ Ezra Pound, “The Seafarer” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 79

³⁷⁸ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 248

³⁷⁹ R.K. Gordon, ed. *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1926) 77

³⁸⁰ Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) 119

by publishing 'The Seafarer' in this venue, where English historical pride and radical progressive politics commingled, Pound did far more than simply contribute to a recovery of interest in Anglo-Saxon prosody [...] he affirmed his solidarity with striking English laborers, particularly what was understood to be their patriotic efforts to recover ancient Saxon liberties.³⁸¹

As has been shown in earlier chapters of this dissertation, the sentiments of personal liberty and social responsibility were prominent themes in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", the prose series that this poem prefaced, and also featured in later contributions to *The New Age*. "By discussing in subsequent contributions to the magazine how the medieval past could provide a precedent for reforming contemporary poetics and politics," Garver continues, "Pound gave literary and cultural support to the efforts of *New Age* editor A.R. Orage and others to apply the example of medieval guilds to a modern industrial economy."³⁸²

'The Seafarer' is a sorrowful poem, an elegy that opens with a poetic expression of loneliness and transience and displays stoic endurance in the face of suffering and alienation. "The transience of life is inevitably a common human concern,"³⁸³ notes one Old-English scholar in regard to 'The Seafarer', but this concern is equally relevant in Pound's age. In particular, the artist's role in society, undefined in modernity, resonates with this notion of transience, this lack of security. As has been discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, in his writings in *The New Age*, Pound was increasingly furious at the social³⁸⁴ and economic challenges that artists faced in the distribution of their work. This feeling of insecurity and transience shared between the seafarer and poet can be understood in the struggles of the former, sailing from port to port, and the challenges of the latter moving, by

³⁸¹ Lee Garver, "Seafarer Socialism: Pound, The New Age, and Anglo-Medieval Radicalism" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29.4 (Summer 2006) 3

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 2

³⁸³ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 240

³⁸⁴ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia I" *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445b. "The contact between the artists and those with whom he must, in the disposal of his work, have contact is, however, so disgusting that I would rather leave it unmentioned."

necessity, from publisher to publisher. In the context of Pound's oeuvre up to this point, this poem can be seen as part of his thematic and technical progression towards the longer sequence and voyage poems of 'Homage to Sextus Propertius', 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley', and the Cantos while incorporating some of the same values as earlier works like 'La Fraisine' (A Lume Spento, 1908), 'Purveyors General' (A Quinzane for this Yule, 1908), and 'Guido Invites you Thus' (Exultations, 1909), among others. In all of these cases, Pound is put in the position of the speaker in the poems and personalizes the messages therein. This relationship between Pound and the projection of subjective mood in his poems will be revisited in the following chapter when other translations that Pound was to publish throughout the decade in the pages of *The New Age* are considered.

Christoph De Nagy's premise that the divide in Pound's poetics falls between the organic and normative forms³⁸⁵ can be extended to the more general terms of the natural and the divine, where one is the defining order and one the inspired meaning. In their studies of Pound's poetry, William Pratt and Peter Nicholls have explored this reading, and Leon Surette has given due credence to the connections between myth and social or economic concerns. The idea of art, Pound told us in The Spirit of Romance, is one with that of religion, and in "Patria Mia", that religion is the artistic expression of philosophy³⁸⁶, so for Pound, "it was necessary to believe in the reality of both nature and myth in order to write poetry at all."³⁸⁷

The later sections of the original poem, sections that Pound excluded from his version, are permeated with both a fear of God and a sense of spiritual reassurance that the hardships on earth shall be alleviated in heaven. In the poem, as Mitchell notes, "the transience of human life is transcended by the hope brought by

³⁸⁵ N. Christoph De Nagy Ezra Pound's Poetics and Literary Tradition: The Critical Decade (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1966)

³⁸⁶ Ezra Pound, "America: Chances and Remedies I" *The New Age* (May 1 1913) 10b

³⁸⁷ William Pratt, ed. Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth (New York: AMS Press, 2002) 1

Christianity.”³⁸⁸ But Pound had addressed this ethereal soul-searching years earlier in the lines of ‘La Fraisne’, a poem so central to Pound’s thought that he had considered using its title for the collection of poetry that eventually became *A Lume Spento* (*With Tapers Quenched*).

“La Fraisne” is concerned with the soul and the spirit but does not deal with the spiritual world in terms of Christian morality. Rather, we are given a unique ‘Poundian’ treatment of nature and myth that deals with the Eleusian mysteries of death and rebirth. The idea of the soul entering the earth dead and reemerging alive are early fascinations of Pound’s, and his “willingness to ‘descend into the world of the dead’, as he put it, through his imagination”³⁸⁹ and adoption of masks takes readers on a journey into what William Pratt has called, “hells, real and imaginary”. When ‘The Seafarer’ is read in the context of Pound’s earlier poetry of the soul, the original poem may be seen not only as a Christian allegory but as a work that celebrates the lonely, unrewarded aesthetic pursuits of the speaker, thus echoing Pound’s sense of exile. These are the elements that Pound ‘illuminates’ in his translation while eliding the Christian ones. The poet speaker strips himself of the common comforts of material gain, of earthen riches, in return for spiritual gain, “so that all men shall honour him after.”³⁹⁰

This idea that works of genius endure forever is at the core of Pound’s aesthetic worldview and central to both his understanding of past literatures and to his work towards fostering a renaissance. We witness this idea in his treatment of exile themes in his prose and poetry where the artist who serves his art well, even if alone and unrecognized, also serves society well. It is central to his image of the seafarer in his rendering of that Anglo-Saxon poem as well as being integral to his

³⁸⁸ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 310

³⁸⁹ William Pratt, ed. *Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth* (New York: AMS Press, 2002) 5

³⁹⁰ Ezra Pound, “The Seafarer” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 79

vision how the impending Risorgimento will be brought about. This dedication to one's craft is an honourable pursuit for Pound whose interest "is not solely one of immediate cash,"³⁹¹ but rather as strong belief that "the individual artist will do fine work in corners, to be discovered after his death."³⁹² Thus through 'The Seafarer' and some of the surrounding prose in *The New Age*, Pound's vision of the artist can be understood as inseparably bound to responsibilities of improving society, culturally and economically. For Pound, the individual has great potential responsibility for "as soon as a man had made sure of the subsistence of his family he has some duty toward the race, not much, but a little." But for each individual there is another equally responsible individual doing his or her part for the improvement of "the running of 'things at large,'"³⁹³ and thus Pound was endorsing a society of responsible individuals that work together towards common goals.

In the original 'The Seafarer', the first 64 lines address the poet's seafaring life and the "hardship endured oft."³⁹⁴ But when on land, "longing comes upon him to fare forth on the water"³⁹⁵ and although he longs for "the joys experienced by those who dwell on the land [...]" the seafarer is driven to seek the sea."³⁹⁶ Christian interpretations of the poem tend to understand this longing as an allegory of life seen as a journey through hardships (the hunger, transience, cold and wind of a seafaring life) towards the peaceful harbour of heaven. In Pound's version of the poem as a dramatic lyric, the protagonist of the poem can be read as an illumination of a personal commentary on the themes of hardship and exile, or as a celebration of "secular heroism in the face of physical harshness, solitary exile and spiritual

³⁹¹ Ezra Pound, "This Super Neutrality" *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21 1915) 595b

³⁹² Ezra Pound, "The Renaissance" *Selected Prose: 1909-1965* William Cookson, ed. 221

³⁹³ Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia VI" *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564a

³⁹⁴ Ezra Pound, "The Seafarer" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) line 3, 236

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, l.49, 237

³⁹⁶ Bruce Mitchell, *Old English & Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 311. The Christian readings which follow are taken from Mitchell, 310-313, who cites Ida Gordon, Geoffrey Smithers, and Dorothy Whitelock.

anguish.”³⁹⁷ In this way, as Hugh Witemeyer has suggested, the character of the Seafarer (and Odysseus) suffers a life that “images that of their creators,” identifying the poet with the plight of his character(s).³⁹⁸ These hardships of the seafaring life and the transience that goes with such an existence can be seen as descriptions of an exiled wanderer pursuing eternal life through honourable acclaim and permanent exile from the subject’s homeland. Such themes certainly resonated with Pound’s self-identification as the poet in exile.

As has been discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, this notion of exile was a condition for Pound’s unique perspective and allowed him a certain authority. He had adopted the masks “of souls that found themselves among/Unwonted folk that spake in hostile tongue”(‘Masks’, ll.2-3), had written of “exquisite loneliness”(‘Anima Sola’, l.1), and had set ‘Cino’ in “Italian Campagna 1309, the open road”. The importance of the poet’s position to be on the fringes of society or, indeed, in exile, was a notion celebrated by Pound’s early poetry and the attraction of relating his own experience in the voice of the ‘The Seafarer’ must be appreciated. “Clearly,” writes Carpenter, “the figure of the rootless, homeless Seafarer was a persona Ezra enjoyed.”³⁹⁹ The themes of loneliness and isolation portrayed can be read in Pound’s version of ‘The Seafarer’ as highly personalized concerns. As a “wretched outcast/ deprived of my kinsmen”(‘The Seafarer’, ll.15-16), Pound was simultaneously an alien as an American in England as well as being an outsider among many of his contemporaries in the arts. In his discussion of Pound’s *Cathay*, Ming Xie sees the poet’s affinity with themes of deliberate solitude and exile as

³⁹⁷ Ming Xie, “Pound as translator” *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound* Ira Nadel, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 207

³⁹⁸ Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) 121

³⁹⁹ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 156

natural parts of the “elegiac mood” that was to later bring the poet to translations of Li Po’s ‘The Exile’s Letter’⁴⁰⁰ and bring the idiom of ‘The Seafarer’ into *Canto I*.⁴⁰¹

The original poem has been interpreted in various ways, but it is generally agreed that it is an elegy in two parts: the first dealing with the seafaring life versus life on land, while the second, after an abrupt shift of focus halfway through line 64, sees the poet’s thoughts “shift from considerations of sea voyages to his ultimate goal of union with the Lord in Heaven.”⁴⁰² Accepting the analogy that suffering for a life at sea parallels the sacrifices that must be made for a pure life in order to reach heaven, ‘The Seafarer’ presents the *interpreting detail* (Pound’s phrase) that “if we can all accept the fact that seafaring men will forgo the pleasure of life on land for the obscure enticements of a dangerous ocean journey, is it unreasonable for Christianity to require renunciation of some earthly delights for the goal of eternal salvation?”⁴⁰³ For Pound, then, this detail is made relevant or *luminous* to the contemporary reader as a parallel of the sacrifices the artist consciously makes for the sake of his/her art. Although Pound seemed to have shared this view of the poem as a quest for eternal *lof*, glory or fame, a solution to this transience that is “more vital to man than the material benefits of this world,”⁴⁰⁴ the sort of eternity the seafarer seeks in Pound’s translation is quite different.

Pound had discussed in his lectures at the London Polytechnic, lectures that became The Spirit of Romance, that ‘good art’ can remain alive and vital long after the artist is neither: “There is to the artist a like honorable opportunity for precision, for that precision through which alone can any of these matters take on their

⁴⁰⁰ Ming Xie, Ezra Pound and the Appropriation of Chinese Poetry (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999) 102-109

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 207

⁴⁰² Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, eds. A Guide to Old English 5th Ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) 276

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 277

⁴⁰⁴ Ida Gordon, ed. The Seafarer (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1979) 10

immortality.”⁴⁰⁵ This ambition was consistent with his attempts to keep the Provençal and Latin lyric poets alive through his own verse by adopting their masks “to resuscitate the dead art/Of poetry, to restore the ‘sublime,’/in the old sense.”[‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (Life and Contacts)’, ll.3-5]

Since 1908, Pound had been relating the past through the verses of his poetry in an ongoing attempt to convey the experience of the poet-seers’ revelations to the contemporary world. As he writes in The Spirit of Romance:

I believe that Greek myth arose when someone having passed through delightful psychic experience tried to communicate it to others[...] Speaking aesthetically, the myths are explications of mood: you may stop there, or you may probe deeper. Certain it is that these myths are only intelligible in a vivid and glittering sense to those people to whom they occur[...] These things are for them *real*.⁴⁰⁶

Communicating the meaningful experiences in the masterworks of the past and relating these themes to the “running of things at large” is precisely how Pound was planning to create his Risorgimento. Pound saw that under any system “‘liberty with responsibility’ can be achieved”, he saw in the 8th to 16th centuries “a model for emulation.”⁴⁰⁷ In the previous chapters Pound’s writing in *The New Age* presented a poet who had been engaged in revolutionary efforts to construct a Risorgimento by illuminating past glories of culture and civilization. This belief was shared by his editor and by other socialists at *The New Age*.

It is in this context that critics like Lee Garver can read ‘The Seafarer’ as a politically charged poem that appealed to the political affiliations of patriotic and English syndicalism, Guild Socialism, whether or not Pound had any interest in the particular details of these doctrines. Pound believed in the idea of national trades, including that of sculpture, art, music, and poetry, and his early contributions to the

⁴⁰⁵ Ezra Pound, “Psychology and Troubadours” The Spirit of Romance (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1910, revised 1952) 88

⁴⁰⁶ Ezra Pound, The Spirit of Romance. London: Peter Owen Limited, 1952) 92

⁴⁰⁷ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VI” *The New Age* XI.24 (October 10, 1912) 564a-b

journal actively made a case for the centrality of the arts to all facets of society. It was thus important, especially in a Socialist journal, to portray art as a trade and as a craft in order to identify the artist with the worker, and vice versa. When writing about art and poetry in *The New Age* Pound was equally engaged in the revolutionary movements being fleshed out in the pages of the weekly as those who wrote about economics and politics. Pound insisted on a mutual respect among professionals for being a ‘heavy-weight’ if he is reported to be expert in some line “sufficiently removed from their own. Thus many men engaged in commerce, in insurance, in the skillful and finer crafts present to the arts an attitude of indifference which is to the artist comfortable and charming. They like him, let us say, and they pardon him his vagaries. No artist can ask more.”⁴⁰⁸ From the translations that he published in *The New Age*, from ‘The Seafarer’(1911) to ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’(1919), Pound was indeed allowed his vagaries.

For Pound, the artist is a free individual, a champion of free-speech. He explored his vision of the necessary and essential freedom of the artist at considerable length in an important essay published in *The New Age* in 1913 entitled “America: Chances and Remedies”. “The artist is free,” Pound insisted:

that is to say he must be free, either by circumstance or by heroism. He must either have nothing to gain that he counts gain or that he would count recompense for lost integrity, or he must have nothing to lose, and in this latter case his days are belike short and his labour is apt to be fitful[...] But the point towards which I strive through all this vagueness is that at no time was there such machinery for the circulation of printed expression—and all this machinery favours a sham. It favours either a false expression or a careless expression or else it favours a thing which is no expression at all. It favours stuff cooked up to suit some editorial palate. And even if his rare utterance will be for a time pushed aside by little or no pains and energy upon the work itself have abundant time for hawking it about.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ Ezra Pound “Patria Mia I” *The New Age* XI.19 (September 5, 1912) 445b

⁴⁰⁹ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies I” *The New Age* (May 1 1913) 10b

Pound's emphases on returning power in poetry to its producers, not to editorial boards who see commerce as the driving force behind creativity, has been observed. The result of this commercial method of selecting art is "dry-rot magazitis", is "the appalling fungus of our 'better magazines.'"⁴¹⁰ In this way, this message of putting power in the hands of the workers was certainly given relevance in the pages of *The New Age*.

Thus, in 1911, Pound's 'The Seafarer' represented Pound's "service to the living art"⁴¹¹ and, as Lee Garver has argued, the poem "gave patriotic voice to the beliefs and values of Anglo-medieval socialists in *The New Age*."⁴¹² Garver offers an interesting contextual illumination of the poem by alluding to the seaman's strike of June and July 1911. He argues that with these events still current in the minds of Pound's audience that Anglo-medieval radicals would have read the poem with topical resonance. Orage had also been very supportive of the strikers and Garver insists that Pound made several informed translation decisions to ensure that the poem would be understood as a commentary on the seaman's strike of the preceding summer. Passages are cited from "Patria Mia" that display, by Garver's reading, Pound's belief that the medieval past could offer instructions to current socialist movements. Passages of other contributions to *The New Age* that display Pound's affinity for the Guild Socialist movement ("Through Alien Eyes", "Allen Upward Serious") are also used to make Garver's case for reading 'The Seafarer' as a political poem. But although some readers at the time of publication, celebrated Pound's poem, Orage included, it had its fair share of detractors as a failure of scholarly translation.

⁴¹⁰ Ezra Pound "Patria Mia IV" *The New Age* XI.22 (September 26, 1912) 516b

⁴¹¹ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris II: A Rather Dull Introduction" *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 131

⁴¹² Lee Garver, "Seafarer Socialism: Pound, The New Age, and Anglo-Medieval Radicalism" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29.4 (Summer 2006) 4

Pound has been accused implicitly and explicitly for showing “scant respect for the poem as it stands”⁴¹³, but whatever his worthiness as an Anglo-Saxon scholar may be, as a poet who was working to explicate a new method of scholarship (whose virtue may have been perceived as inaccuracy⁴¹⁴) he irrefutably executed central tenets of his aesthetic programme. Pound’s version of ‘The Seafarer’ simultaneously addressed his concern for technical accuracy and luminous detail while eliding the Christian themes of the original and illuminating the spiritual themes that he perceived to have been ‘baptised’ out of the original.

Pound captured the alliterative effects where possible, and sometimes quite awkwardly, and reinstated what he sees as the true sentiments of the poem:

Wealthy and wine-flushed, how I weary oft
Mist bide above brine.

or

The mews’ singing all my mead-drink
Storms, on the stone-cliffs beaten, fell on the stern⁴¹⁵

display the lengths to which Pound went to maintain the alliterative effects of the original poem. Pound imitated the alliterative form of the Anglo-Saxon elegy and insisted on choosing English words that did not always capture the sense of the original. He lost the *cæsure* of the Anglo-Saxon elegy form and creates single lines while maintaining the alliterative functions: “A vast number of subjects cannot be precisely, and therefore not properly rendered in symmetrical forms.” He wrote that art is progress through imitation⁴¹⁶ and that each word “should bear some burden, should make some special contribution to the effect of the whole.” His words were chosen carefully, even if sometimes inaccurately, but he was not treating ‘The

⁴¹³ Ida Gordon, ed. *The Seafarer* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1979) 1

⁴¹⁴ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 169 The Seafarer “may have prompted readers who knew Anglo-Saxon to wonder whether the ‘New Method’ made a virtue of inaccuracy”

⁴¹⁵ Ezra Pound, “The Seafarer” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) ll.30-31 and ll.22-23

⁴¹⁶ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” *The New Age* X.10 (January 4, 1912) 224a

Seafarer' as a source-text of translation but rather as a living poem. His alacrity is rarely matched by clarity, but he does escape from frilly decoration and managed to create a patriotic and pagan rendering of the Anglo-Saxon poem in *The New Age*.

In Pound's version of 'The Seafarer' there is nostalgia for a stoic and proud England, a country that chooses what is morally right rather than material gain. Meanwhile, the poetic expression of the personal predicament of exile is expounded upon in the poem. These are some of the themes Pound illuminated in the Anglo-Saxon text that, he posited, would resonate with his age, and most importantly with the poem's immediate audience, the readers of *The New Age*. William Pratt excuses Pound's accuracy of translation for his accuracy of sentiment writing, "Pound could cavalierly ignore the scholarly virtues of accuracy and consistency if it suited him; on the other hand he was an amazing virtuoso with language who could practice poetic virtues of imagination never dreamed of by scholars."⁴¹⁷

On this evidence, the aims of Pound appear to be part of a very controlled approach that becomes increasingly frustrated over the decade in his prose (as has been observed) as well as in his poetry. There is a detectable, though not necessarily consistent, trajectory in Pound's early poetry in his occupation of personae that make the artist fulfill his "duty toward the race" through a character of genius from the past that faces adversity and makes significant contributions to culture and society at large. As observed most lucidly by Hugh Witemeyer, the masks that Pound used in his poetry were his attempts to locate the "human life force in the human psyche" by establishing "provisional identities for himself as a poet"⁴¹⁸. In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", Pound acknowledged that his thorough adoption of Guido Cavalcanti and Latin poets, Arnaut Daniel and troubadour poets has "impinge[d] on my own poetry

⁴¹⁷ William Pratt, ed. *Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth* (New York: AMS Press, 2002) 3

⁴¹⁸ Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) 83

in ‘Canzoni.’” Pound proudly admitted that he shall continue to sin in the face of some critics who “think I should be more interested in the poetry which I write myself than in ‘fine poetry as a whole’.”⁴¹⁹ As a part of his continuing service to the living art, Pound translated ‘The Seafarer’. In his translation, stripped of Christian allegory, the poet’s stoic endurance in the face of suffering creates an image of the harsh present and an evocation of a glorious past. Pound presents us with a determined exile, not unlike himself, recognizing that it would be easier to go back to land, but persisting on his journey “on high streams”.

Pound’s personal journey “to fare forth on the water”⁴²⁰ through the poetry of the past in an attempt to create a modern voice motivated his efforts to bring America into a new age of arts and letters, a Risorgimento, from his exiled position in London. His instructions often read like confessions of his own desires and actions in his pursuit of a contemporary style: “The American artist must at least find out what is worth doing before he can expect either to do it or to be taken seriously.”⁴²¹ When an American artist has learned what is best, Pound hoped “he will never after be content with the second rate.”⁴²² As has been discussed in previous chapters, the importance of international exchange or intellectual conversation is necessary to advance the arts and Pound’s self-positioning as exile created a role that would facilitate that exchange. His adoption of masks and personae of poetic and historical figures from varied cultures is the central poetic method Pound utilized in updating the past for the benefit of the impending Risorgimento of the future.

The article in *The New Age*, “The Approach to Paris”(September 4, 1913-October 16, 1913), comes after three series in the journal that addressed the

⁴¹⁹ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 131a

⁴²⁰ Ezra Pound, “The Seafarer” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) l. 47

⁴²¹ Ezra Pound “Patria Mia VII” *The New Age* XI.25 (October 17, 1912) 588a

⁴²² Ezra Pound “Patria Mia XI” *The New Age* XII.2 (November 14, 1912) 33b

possibilities of an artistic enlightenment in America. Pound expresses a belief that “the history of English poetic glory is a history of successful steals from the French.”⁴²³ As Pound explained in “America: Chances and Remedies”:

If you have in mind the efflorescence, you will mistake me, you will say: ‘An epic in Portugal, a Pleiade in France, Drama in Spain and England, blue stockings and painters in Holland.’ There is nothing planned and concerted in these things. But if you consider Italy where the whole brew was concocted you will be able to find out at least this, namely, that the Italian scholars and enthusiasts were early and always in more or less intimate touch—hostile or otherwise—with their contemporaries, and the poems two lines long in Latin quantity went swiftly from one end of the peninsula to the other.⁴²⁴

This sort of exchange was what Pound was attempting to facilitate in his translations from countries, cultures, and languages, what Hugh Kenner describes as “deliberate dramatizations which extend the modes of thinking and feeling accessible to the quotidian inhabitant of a given London decade.”⁴²⁵ For Pound, “the accumulated duty or responsibility of a nation amounts to a very great deal,”⁴²⁶ and his conscious attempts to enlighten the intellect of America and Britain, his nation of self-exile and his nation of refuge, were central plights in his *New Age* campaign.

⁴²³ Ezra Pound, “The Approach to Paris II” *The New Age* XIII.20 (September 11, 1913) 577a

⁴²⁴ Ezra Pound, “America: Chances and Remedies I” *The New Age* XIII.1 (May 1, 1913) 10a

⁴²⁵ Hugh Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1951) 135

⁴²⁶ Ezra Pound, “The Seafarer” *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations* Richard Sieburth, ed. (New York: The Library of America, 2003) 79

⁴²⁶ Ezra Pound, “This Super Neutrality” *The New Age* XVII.25 (October 21 1915) 595b

CHAPTER 6

Translating Themes of Exile in *The New Age*: 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'

Following the examination of 'The Seafarer' in the previous chapter, this chapter continues the exploration of the literary themes of alienation and exile in Pound's writing in *The New Age* by examining further works of translation published later in the 1910s.

As has been observed in Chapter Five, the changes that Pound made in his translation of 'The Seafarer' that appeared in *The New Age* in 1911 align with his poetic and philosophical ideologies and do not seem to be motivated, at least not exclusively, by textual or scholarly considerations. Rather the themes of the poem are presented in subjective personal expressions that appear to conflate the ambitions of the author with that of the actor/protagonist. It is as if his new translation is a conversation between the Anglo-Saxon seafarer and the exile poet/critic where Pound has instilled the values of medieval paganism into what has ostensibly been called a 'Christian lyric' while forming a critique of bourgeois values that he must escape in the execution of his craft.⁴²⁷ So this poem is not a literal 'translation' as it has been observed that Pound surgically removed sections and injected new ideas into the poem, but these exclusions and additions are responsible for the success of the translation in conveying artistic and political ideas with which Pound's writing in *The New Age* indicates he was concerned. Daniel M. Hooley writes, "Pound is proposing a model of thinking about and translating certain classical poets that is

⁴²⁷ This has been elaborated upon by Garver's more recent 'socialist' reading, but originally appeared in Donald Davie's *Poet as Sculptor* and subsequently in Hugh Witemeyer's *The Poetry of Ezra Pound*.

phrased in personal terms and based in cooperation, even collaboration. Further, the translator's job of work is to bring some *personal* essence, more than a verbal presence, into modern English and to people now." This personal presence is clear in 'The Seafarer' and it is both Pound's intention and effect to make the concerns that he reads as central to the poem contemporary and relevant. Hooley continues, "The connection between author and translator can penetrate to the deepest levels of being and consciousness."⁴²⁸ It is by reading Pound in this context, or that provided by the chronological readings of Pound by Hugh Witemeyer, that the poet of 'The Seafarer' can be seen as what Eliot called 'a critic of men'.

In his study of Pound's early poetry, Hugh Witemeyer states his aim "to widen the focus of studies of Pound's poetic achievement" with an "investigation in to how Pound got from one stage to the next."⁴²⁹ For the current author, *The New Age* offers a unique insight into the development of Pound's 'poetic achievement' as it is in its pages that Pound published "The Seafarer"(1911), several of his Chinese translations(June, 1916), and "Homage to Sextus Propertius"(June, 1919) in the context of social and economic discourses and Pound's own cultural critique. *The New Age* is where Pound published "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"(1911-12), "Provincialism the Enemy"(1917) and "Pastiche: The Regional"(1919), prose pieces that have offered insight into Pound's political, social and aesthetic perspectives in a time when the poems in translation were created and thus there can be no better contextualization of the creative works.

T.S. Eliot writes in 1917, "When anyone has studied Mr. Pound's poems in chronological order, and has mastered 'Lustra' and 'Cathay,' he is prepared for the *Cantos*—but not till then. If the reader then fails to like them, he has probably

⁴²⁸ Daniel M. Hooley, *The Classics in Paraphrase: Ezra Pound and Modern Translators of Latin Poetry* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988) 31

⁴²⁹ Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) viii

omitted some step in his progress, and had better go back and retrace the journey.”⁴³⁰

This journey is one that takes Pound from the first curve of creation, his early poetics from the medieval masks and mysticism of A Lume Spento and Canzoni through Anglo-Saxon national character in ‘The Seafarer’ to the English ‘image’, London ‘vortex’, and Chinese ideogram of Cathay. In the introduction of Selected Poems of Ezra Pound, Eliot called Pound, “the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time.”⁴³¹

Pound began work on a collection of Chinese translations based on the notes of Ernest Fenollosa while staying with Yeats at Stone Cottage, Coleman’s Hatch, near Ashdown Forest in Southeast England in the winter of 1914-15. The American sinologist’s widow had given her late husband’s research notes to Pound in 1913. Fenollosa’s praise for the concrete presentation of the Chinese ideogram and its ideal use as a medium for poetry confirmed Pound’s conviction in ‘the image’, “an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.”⁴³² The Chinese poems had an appeal to Pound because of their clear, hard, direct presentation of their materials, precision echoed in Pound’s Imagist doctrine. Cathay was published in April 1915 and Humphrey Carpenter has suggested that the timing was perfect because “he happened to be in a period of calm after the mock-explosions of BLAST, with no urgent campaigns to conduct, no pressing battles to fight.”⁴³³ From this critical calm, a second curve of Pound’s development began with the creation of Cathay and the moves towards the fifty-year project of The Cantos.

In a review of Cathay that appeared in April 29, 1915, Arthur Clutton-Brock called the collection ‘sharp and precise’. He writes:

There is a superstition among us that a translation should always seem quite English. But when it is made from a literature very alien in method and

⁴³⁰ T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1917) 28

⁴³¹ T.S. Eliot, ed. Ezra Pound: Selected Poems (London: Faber and Faber, 1928) xvi

⁴³² Ezra Pound, “A Retrospect” Literary Essays of Ezra Pound T.S. Eliot, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) 4

⁴³³ Humphrey Carpenter, A Serious Character: Ezra Pound. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 270

thought, it is not a translation at all if it seems quite English. Besides, a literal translation from something strange and good may surprise our language into new beauties. If we invite a foreigner of genius among us, we don't want to make him behave just like ourselves; we shall enjoy him best and learn most from him if he remains himself. So we think Mr Pound has chosen the right method in these translations, and we do not mind that they often are 'not English.' The words are English and give us the sense; and after all it is the business of a writer to mould language to new purposes, not to say something new just as his forefathers said something old.⁴³⁴

Among the most vocal admirers of Pound's version of 'The Seafarer' was A.R. Orage who called the poem that appeared in the pages of his journal four years before *Cathay*, "Mr. Pound's masterly translation". Orage saw the Chinese poems as great successes. He wrote that *Cathay* "contains some excellent work [...] the best and only good work Mr. Ezra Pound has yet done."⁴³⁵ But again, Pound had his detractors. Arthur Waley, an accomplished Chinese scholar, sought to remedy the inaccuracies of Pound's translations when he published *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918) but could not free himself of the Imagist soul or "intense lyrical moment"⁴³⁶ that Pound had given them in English.

Although critics have been polarized in the case of these translations, Pound's conviction for 'luminous detail' over 'abstraction', an ideal expressed in his first series for *The New Age* and echoed in his Imagist doctrine, finds practical artistic application in the poems of *Cathay*. Further, the simple presentation of images, the lining up of slides, what Pound eventually called 'The Ideogrammatic Method', is rooted in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and encouraged by the Fenollosa notes and "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry." Carpenter writes that Pound "was trying to achieve some clarity and sense after an academic fog, and at the best moments of his work he captured it—nowhere better than in *Cathay*, which is simply the cool presentation of certain facets of

⁴³⁴ Arthur Clutton Brock, "Poems from Cathay. Cathay: Translations by Ezra Pound" in *The Modern Movement* John Gross, ed. (London: Harper Collins, 1992) 14-15

⁴³⁵ A.R. Orage, "Readers and Writers" *The New Age* XVII.14 (August 5, 1915) 332b

⁴³⁶ Ming Xie, *Ezra Pound and the Appropriation of Chinese Poetry* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999) 102

experience,” rejecting coherent lines of argument “in favour of implied mental relationships.”⁴³⁷ As Pound had written years earlier in “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” in *The New Age*, “certain facts give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law.”⁴³⁸ These implied mental relationships were to appear in application in “Homage to Sextus Propertius”.

The New Age office in Cursitor Street was the meeting place of forward-thinking minds. Meeting the associates of A.R. Orage brought Pound in touch with ideas of occultism and socialism, and Leon Surette posits that, “As it happens Pound’s occult friends (who informed his understanding of myth) and his *New Age* friends (who formulated his understanding of economics) were not two sets, but a single set.”⁴³⁹ In the wake of four years of unforeseen violence, the social importance of aesthetic pursuits was significantly diminished. For Pound, the politically engaged artist had to find a way to keep art vital in an age of social change. In this pursuit, Pound was in a good position with the bulk of his writing appearing in the pages of a socially engaged weekly.

In spite of the mood of disillusionment brought on by the horrors of the war, Pound produced two of his finest and most discussed poems, ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ and ‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley’, although discussion of the former has greatly diminished in recent years. The mystical value Pound placed on raising new life from the dead had a wholly new relevance after years of violent war that took the lives of Pound’s friends and contemporaries, among many others. It is of great relevance then that both of these poems published immediately after the war, in 1919 and 1920 respectively, dwell on the themes of death. The poems explore what art, and thus dead artists, can leave civilization in the form of permanent artifacts of

⁴³⁷ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 273

⁴³⁸ Ezra Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: A Rather Dull Introduction” *The New Age* X.6 (December 7, 1911) 130a

⁴³⁹ Leon Surette, *Pound in Puragatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 48

beauty: "An artist sought to show at once what was tangible and what was intangible in human experience[...] He resurrects the living from the dead by the truthfulness and exactness of his expression."⁴⁴⁰ And if the artist can be successful in this pursuit then, "all men shall honour him after." ('The Seafarer', l.77)

Cathay(1915) was written from the notes and drafts of Ernest Fenollosa, and although composed well before reading Douglas, these poems do set up a standard of translation that has been discussed as 'exchange.' Pound had written that two nations "exchange not only cash, credit, gold, etc., but they also exchange impressions."⁴⁴¹ The poems were written based on Fenollosa's scholarly work on the Chinese language that embodied the idea of single images or ideograms conveying meaning as the root of poetic composition. In these translations, the exchange of sense was of more importance than the exchange of literal, word-by-word meanings. The subject-verb-object was the natural unit of poetic perception in Chinese, and this simplification of language could be used in English poetry, confirming Pound's continued belief in 'luminous detail' and the power of 'the image'. An 'emotional complex' could be presented in English and Pound had attempted this with his new forms inspired by the poetry of Rihaku/Li-Po. Again, Pound used the poetry of the past to promote his own program for poetry,⁴⁴² in this case the translations of Rihaku's poetry, poems from the same period as 'The Seafarer' but from a wholly different culture.

The unit of poetic measure had been the pentameter, a form Pound had never accepted as being well suited for poetic expression, instead using the lyric forms of provençal for his early poetry, playing with the canzon and the dactylic pentameter

⁴⁴⁰ William Pratt, ed. Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth (New York: AMS Press, 2002) 8

⁴⁴¹ Ezra Pound "American Chaos II" *The New Age* XVII.20 (September 16, 1915) 471a

⁴⁴² Indeed, Pound pushes his program for poetry even when the features attributed to the Chinese sources might not be accurate or accepted by scholars of Chinese literature. For a discussion of Pounds interpretations and translations see Ming Xie, Ezra Pound and the Appropriation of Chinese Poetry (1999), Chapters 3 and 4.

rather that Pound had found a strong individual through whom to illuminate the details of permanent concerns and bring some new understanding to the contemporary world.

For the purposes of this dissertation, the temptation to critique the poem as a translation must be resisted because that would be to miss what Pound was trying to do by publishing one of his most challenging translations in the pages of an increasingly revolutionary journal, *The New Age*. In Pound's own day the poem attracted too much irrelevant criticism, and has continued to do so. Where J.P. Sullivan, author of what is still the essential study of Pound's 'Homage to Sextus Propertius', has called the 'Homage' a "creative translation", Donald Davie has taken the approach of treating it as an original poem, while other critics have found it impossible to call it outright "translation." Perhaps we should excuse ourselves from this debate as it has distracted close study of the poem or the relevance of the contexts of its creation and publication. Pound himself dropped the rubric 'translation' after W.G. Hale's "Pegasus Impounded" (*Poetry*, XIV, 1919) and the anonymous review in *The New Age*.⁴⁴⁸ Sullivan posits that this abandonment of the term "translation" was a protective step,⁴⁴⁹ part of the move towards a renunciation in the face of growing criticism and the lack of care taken, or lack of ability, for Pound to clearly explain what his intentions were. The focus of this dissertation is not to argue the method of Pound's 'translation' or the competence of his Latin. Rather, the intention here is to discover what Pound's choice to feature the poems in the pages of *The New Age* can reveal about the themes that the poem exposes in the context of such a journal, especially in the context of his own prose pronouncements in *The New Age*. It will be shown that the poem can be meaningfully engaged at a

⁴⁴⁸ "Reviews" *The New Age* XVI.4 (November 27, 1919) 62

⁴⁴⁹ J.P. Sullivan *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964) 10. Also expanded upon by Daniel M. Hooley *The Classics in Paraphrase: Ezra Pound and Modern Translators of Latin Poetry* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988) 30

safe distance from the debates of Drew-Bear, Messing, and Davie through the 1960s, 70s, and 80s⁴⁵⁰ by not calling this work *translation*, or struggling to borrow the term used by C.H. Wallace, one of Pound's detractors, *refraction*, but rather to settle on 'Homage' as a *version* of the elegies of Propertius.

Pound simultaneously took great liberties and risks in the selection and ordering of the elegies as well as making many interpolations of his own. Pound began 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' by expressing the artist's need to focus on inspired verse and ignore the oppressions of Empire. Although the world does not welcome his lyrics, time will immortalize his reputation thereby echoing the central theme of 'The Seafarer', as discussed earlier, and is a necessary theme in the sorrowful form of elegy. For Pound, Propertius was "very much a rebellious artist like himself, 'really up against things very much as one is now', and he set out to resuscitate this true Propertius for modern readers, hoping he could 'give as much Rome as *Cathay* gave China'."⁴⁵¹ But his work has been insulted with words such as "comic", "burlesque", and a "juvenile spoof", and sense must be made of the poem in the context of *The New Age*.

Pound did not employ a consistent poetic voice in his early poetry and his oscillations between modern 'minimalist' tones and archaic romantic style was something expected from his poetry since his *Ripostes* of 1912. In 'Plunge'⁴⁵², Pound the modern poet writes:

I would bathe myself in strangeness:
These comforts heaped upon me, smother me!
I burn, I scald so for the new,

⁴⁵⁰ After Sullivan's full length study (1964), the work of these three critics has generally represented the different schools of thought surrounding the poem in the subsequent decades: 'Translation' with Thomas Drew-Bear's "Ezra Pound's 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'" (1965), 'revision' with Donald Davie's *Ezra Pound* (1976) and 'literary contextualization' in Ron Thomas' chapter in *The Latin Masks of Ezra Pound* (1983)

⁴⁵¹ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 325

⁴⁵² Ezra Pound, "Plunge" Sieburth, Richard, ed. *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 242

New friends, new faces,
 Places!
 Oh to be out of this,
 This that is all I wanted
 —save the new.
 And you,
 Love, you the much the more desired!
 Do I not loathe all walls, streets, stones,
 All mire, mist, all fog,
 All ways of traffic?
 You, I would have flow over me like water,
 Oh, but far out of this!
 Grass, and low fields, and hills,
 And sun,
 Oh, sun enough!
 Out and alone, among some
 Alien people!

(‘Plunge’)⁴⁵³

Again, the themes of exile and alienation appear in Pound’s work, and the technique is modern. But the following poem in the 1912 collection displays the older voice of the poet. He writes in ‘A Virginal’:

No, No! Go from me. I have left her lately.
 I will not spoil my sheathe with lesser brightness,
 For my surrounding air has a new lightness;
 Slight are her arms, yet they have bound me straitly
 And left me cloaked as with a gauze of aether;
 As with sweet leaves; as with a subtle clearness.
 Oh, I have picked up magic in her nearness
 To sheath me half in half the things that sheathe her

(‘A Virginal’, ll. 1-8)⁴⁵⁴

Although using these different voices, although addressing common themes, these two poems were published in the same collection. Pounds style was not consistent, so much so that this inconsistency defined his style; he did not go in fear of experimentation.

⁴⁵³ Ezra Pound, “Plunge” Sieburth, Richard, ed. *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 242

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., “A Virginal” 243

in the spring of 1916. He had been directing her reading, surveying the field of influence from the past poets while expounding on what was vital in poetry: “plain statements”, “a trust in the thing more than the word”. Pound wrote:

The whole art is divided into:
concision, or style, or saying what you mean in the fewest and clearest words.
The actual necessity for creating or constructing something; of presenting an
image, or enough images of concrete things arranged to stir the reader.⁴⁵⁷

His letters to Barry were among his most long-winded and expressive. In them we witness the state of mind of Pound as teacher, critic and poet, using a position of power to try to teach others what he had learned from his own mistakes. In these letters, Pound complains of the suppression of art and the artist in the wake of the censoring of his *Lustra*. He had been expressing this anger with publishing institutions in *The New Age*, most recently with “Provincialism the Enemy”(1917) and “Studies in Contemporary Mentality”(1918). It is to Barry that Pound famously wrote, “And if you CAN’T find *any* decent translations of Catallus and Propertius, I suppose I shall have to rig up something.”⁴⁵⁸ It seems he did attempt to fashion Propertius for the contemporary reader and write a modern elegy.

Twelve sections of the Propertius series were initially submitted to Harriet Monroe for the inclusion in *Poetry*. She published just four of them under the title “Poems from the Propertius Series I-IV” in March 1919. Three months later began a series of six in *The New Age* called ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’. Two of these poems were reprints from those that appeared in *Poetry*. It is known that Pound began work on the series after a false start on *The Cantos* with ‘Three Cantos’. Although Pound began to work on what was to become the Propertius series in 1917, a time when his prose for *The New Age* launched venomous attacks on ‘provincialism’, ignorance, and conformity in “Provincialism the Enemy” and

⁴⁵⁷ Ezra Pound to Iris Barry (July 27, 1916). *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 90

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 91

focused on the British press in a surveying series called “Studies in Contemporary Mentality”, the poems were not considered for publication until 1919. These were his busiest years in London, or at least, his most productive, publishing over 60 articles in periodicals in the second half of 1917 alone.

At the end of 1917 Pound launched his ‘Art Notes’ by B.H. Dias and his ‘Music’ column as William Atheling. He had been working hard promoting other artists but had grown increasingly frustrated with the demands of convincing editors to print other authors such as Eliot, Lewis, and Joyce. He knew that “great art is never popular to begin with” and had comforted himself with the hope for acceptance of his genius after his death even if society was economically marginalising the exiled artist. He had no faith in the public judgement of art, especially through the publishing mode, which “favours a sham.” When his attempts to put together a journal of his own between 1912-1916 had amounted to nothing and the frustrations of appealing to editors, most of whom were female, drove him to try to convince John Quinn to fund “a male review”, Pound was in a position to utilize *The New Age* to the fullest extent.

Pound had become the foreign editor to the *Little Review*, was a continuing contributor to the *Egoist* and he had been the only regular columnist to remain on the payroll of *The New Age* during the wartime newsprint rationing which saw the journal reduced to just sixteen pages per issue. His published poetry consisted of what seemed to be self-grounding practices in the troubadours as he re-thought his false-started epic and became increasingly pre-occupied with prose writing. As discussed in previous chapters, this new undertaking could very well have been largely motivated by financial need rather than a period of inspired genius. Pound was in an active period of dissatisfaction ever since the muffled impact of *BLAST* and the censorship controversy surrounding the publication of *Lustra*. Between

1915-1917 he had turned his increasingly venomous attacks to provincialism, the public mind, and the press. He expressed “contempt for contemporary mentality, for the reading public, for the way the ‘world of letters’ goes on.”⁴⁵⁹ The importance he had placed on artistic individuality extended to social individuality as he increasingly began to express his belief that the denial of this freedom resulted in the evils of provincialism, imperialism, and war. The world of letters and the world of life were becoming intricately connected as they continued to provide examples for Pound of the oppression of the original nonconforming individual.

His series in twenty parts for *The New Age*, “Studies in Contemporary Mentality”(August 1917-January 1918) was an extremely critical analysis of the British press in which he was making sarcastic, witty and cutting observations about popular magazines, searching for some impression of the psychology of the nation. Conclusions to the investigation seem decided from the start as opinions on the stupidity of the masses, the inability to recognize divergent personalities and celebrate ‘the individual’ were already part of Pound’s cultural critique. Nothing had changed since ‘The Seafarer’ took him alone into the aesthetic realm “to do good work in corners”, to “fare forth on the sea” and his frustration and dissatisfaction were growing along with his own conviction that he was right and so many others were wrong.

In “Pastiche: The Regional”, the series that appeared in juxtaposing weeks alongside ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’, Pound attacked all institutions that bred conformity including religion, modern scholarship and the academic institutions, and modern publishing. His dissatisfaction with the social and political climate for the production of good art was at a career high and his *Lustra* had faced a censorship controversy. In conjunction with this was his increasing frustration at what he

⁴⁵⁹ Ezra Pound in A David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 324

perceived as the stagnant intellectual life of London: "I appear to be the only person of interest left in the world of art, London. I have had a fine row over *Lustra*; as both Mathews and the printer decline to go on with it on grounds of indecorum, I am getting 300 copies printed almost unabridged at Mathew's expense and he is to print the rest *castrato*."⁴⁶⁰

Lustra was an incorporation of various poems from *Ripostes* to *Cathay* among other new compositions. Elkin Mathews had agreed to publish the collection but the printer W. C. K. Clowes had several major objections. This suppression and 'castration' of his collection angered Pound for it compromised the individual freedom in artistic expression that he so valued while simultaneously, so far as he was concerned, restricted the arrival of the *Risorgimento* for which he was still waiting.

In 1918-1919 Pound encountered another case of suppression in his serialization of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in the *Little Review*. Serialisation began in the American journal in March 1918 because in Britain the printers could face imprisonment for publishing what might be deemed as obscene. Still, Pound wrote to Joyce "I suppose we'll be damn well suppressed if we print the text as it stands. BUT it is damn well worth it."⁴⁶¹ By January 1919 the US Postal Authorities stopped the delivery of part of 'Lestrygonians'. They stopped another section in May 1919, January 1920, and again in July and August of that year. The only obscenity that Pound saw was with the suppression of art and what he saw as the idiocy of America. Censorship had been a central concern of Pound's since his own troubles with *Lustra* in America and negative reactions to poems in the collection. For example, lines in 'To a Friend Writing Upon Cabaret Dancers':

⁴⁶⁰ Ezra Pound to Wyndham Lewis (June 24, 1916) *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 83

⁴⁶¹ Ezra Pound in *Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce* Forrest Read, ed. (New York: New Directions, 1970) 129

Good 'Hedgethorn,' for we'll anglicize your name
 Until the last slut's hanged and the last pig disemboweled [...]
 She will not bathe too often, but her jewels
 Will be a stuffy, opulent sort of fungus
 Spread on both hands and on the up-pushed bosom

(ll.1-2, 9-11)⁴⁶²

With such a climate of censorship that would suppress poems like this, the Risorgimento seemed to be ever further away to Pound.

In its new form, *Lustra* was in some ways a fuller expression of Pound's poetic vision and, although fragmented, he wanted it to be seen as a whole. Pound wanted it to be

read as 'a complete service to life', that is, as 'a sort of musical construction' in which the several dimensions of a human life were represented—divine states of mind or gods, battles against evil forces, occasions of peace and love, also the inner dramas of the human spirit, and the comedies of ethics in action.⁴⁶³

He wrote to Iris Barry:

If by any chance you intended to get my new volume of poems *Lustra* when it comes out, then do for God's sake order your copy at once UNABRIDGED.

The idiot Mathews has got the whole volume set up in type, and has now got a panic and marked 25 poems for deletion. Most of them have already been printed in magazines without causing any scandal whatever, and some of them are among the best in the book. (It contains *Cathay*, some new Chinese stuff and all my own work since *Ripostes*.)

The scrape is both serious and ludicrous. Some of the poems will have to go, but in other cases the objections are too stupid for words. It is part printer and part Mathews. [...] The printers have gone quite mad since the Lawrence fuss. Joyce's new novel has gone to American (AMERICA!) to be printed by an enthusiastic publisher. Something has got to be done or we'll all of us be suppressed, à la counter reformation, dead and done for.⁴⁶⁴

In Propertius, Pound found a kindred spirit, an exile poet similarly dissatisfied by the state of society and culture that surrounded him. For Pound,

⁴⁶² Ezra Pound, "To Friend Writing on Cabaret Dancers" Sieburth, Richard, ed. *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 311

⁴⁶³ David A. Moody *Ezra Pound: Poet Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 286

⁴⁶⁴ Ezra Pound to Iris Barry (May 1916) *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 81

Propertius is “very much a rebellious artist like himself, ‘really up against things very much as one is now’, and he set out to resuscitate this true Propertius for modern readers, hoping he could ‘give as much Rome as Cathay gave China’.”⁴⁶⁵

The stress on the artist’s relationship to society, again isolation and exile, is what is at the centre of these translations, especially in the context of *The New Age*. Rather than the private themes of the seafarer’s Christian redemption or Propertius’ erotic love for Cynthia it is the public themes of resistance to society’s demands upon the individual in his pursuit of a dedication to art rather than a woman, Cynthia, the object of Propertius’ love, that are illuminated in Pound’s versions of the texts: “This stress on the relation of the artist to society, the vindication of private poetic morality against public compulsions whether these be the demands of a government or promises of fame and fortune, is what Pound saw as the important element in Propertius and this is the critical burden of the *Homage*.”⁴⁶⁶ Propertius had composed a full book of elegies dedicated to Cynthia before Maecenas became his patron. After this period, as the second book of the *Elegies* shows, Propertius was urged to meet with the apparent demands to write political and patriotic verse and fewer love poems. The first book begins “Cynthia first...” which is a pronouncement of more than the authors’ subject, but of his priorities. Meanwhile, the second book begins with a verse justification of “how it is I write so often of love:”⁴⁶⁷

You ask me how it is I write so often of love
And how my verses come soft on the tongue.
These no Apollo, no Calliope sings to me;
My only inspiration is a girl.

(Propertius *Book II*, ll. 1-4)⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁵ Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 325

⁴⁶⁶ J.P. Sullivan *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964) 29

⁴⁶⁷ Sextus Propertius, *The Poems/ Propertius* Guy Lee, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)
Unless otherwise stated, or unless quoting Pound’s version, all references to lines in Propertius’ *Elegies* will be to this version.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 27

In protest, as K.K. Ruthven and J.P. Sullivan explain, Propertius craftily continues to write, “the sort of poetry for which he knew he was best fitted.”⁴⁶⁹ This integrity of poetic vision in the face of what “the age demanded” appealed to Pound for reasons that have been discussed. But patronage, that institution which Pound had been encouraging since 1912, now seemed to bear influence, to impinge on the artists independence as it had, he showed, in Propertius’ time. The artist must be dedicated to being true to himself, according to Pound, and this sort of ‘certitude’ should bring great artists into positions of power and influence. In his memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska, Pound reprinted from his 1915 series in *The New Age* (“Affirmations”) another of his formulations about two types of mind “which the mediocre world hates most:”

There is this mind of the slow gestation, whose absoluteness terrifies ‘the man in the street.’[...] There is the type ‘Leonardo,’ that follows the lightning for model, that strikes now here, now there with bewildering rapidity, and with a certitude of its own. The first type is escapable, or at least, temporarily evadable. You cannot contradict the man’s affirmations, but you can at least leave him alone in his corner. You can kill time and avoid looking things in the face. This type is, let us say, the less alarming. The second type is, I suppose, the most hated; that is to say, the most feared. You never know where the man will turn up. You never know what he will do next, and, for that matter, when he won’t do something or other better than you can, or pierce you belovedest delusion. The first type is crowned in due course, the second type, never till death. After Leonardo is dead professors can codify his results. They can produce a static dogma and return in peace to their slumbers.⁴⁷⁰

Quoting these statements in their entirety is worthwhile because in them we can read Pound’s bitterness of tone while understanding his premise that recognition of genius is not to be had until after one is dead because the public seems unable to digest true original and individual genius. Further, the institutions that should support the artist’s free creation, magazines, patrons, were selling his interests to the service of Empire or marketplace. This is the bitterness and disillusion that was to

⁴⁶⁹ K.K. Ruthven *A Guide to Ezra Pound’s Personae* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 84

⁴⁷⁰ Ezra Pound, *Gaudier Brzeska: A Memoir* (New York: New Directions, 1970) 100

become the keynote of Pound's 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley', a sentiment expressed with far less anger in the poetry of 'The Seafarer' and with some recognition of the futility of endeavor that J.P. Sullivan observes for us in 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'.

All these paragraphs spent on what no-doubt seem general observations of various biographical and technical facts are necessary preliminaries to a closer consideration of the poem itself. The previous paragraphs, indeed, the previous chapters, have been intended to state as clearly as possible Pound's positioning as poet-exile, as an engaged intelligence with social, political, and economic alienation through a relationship with *The New Age*. His specific pronouncements on related topics have been referenced and his earliest translation in *The New Age* has been discussed. Now, some of what Pound's 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' actually says can be critically examined in full light of its complicated context. The first five lines of the poem offer a starting point.

Shades of Callimachus, Coan ghosts of Philetas
It is in your grove I would walk,
I who come first from the clear font
 Bringing the Grecian orgies into Italy,
 And the dance in to Italy
 (11.1-5)⁴⁷¹

Readers of Pound are used to the abundance of external references in his poetry, especially in *The Cantos*. In the case of a translation, it must be remembered that the initial audience of these lines in the times of Propertius would not only have understood who Philetas and Callimachus were; they would have had a whole array of ideological and aesthetic associations with the historical characters. To Propertius (as well as Ovid and Catallus), Callimachus was highly regarded for his elegies. Propertius' reference to the poet acknowledges this admiration and poetic inspiration,

⁴⁷¹ Ezra Pound, "Homage to Sextus Propertius" *The New Age* XXV.8 (June 19, 1919) 132b

but for Pound the relevance of beginning his Propertius series with a section of the elegies goes beyond an acknowledgement of influence.

Callimachus was a poet in Alexandria in the 3rd century BCE, a time when poets had central roles in society and he has been called the inventor of the concept of art for art's sake. He was prolific writer, a scholar and a librarian and typifies Hellenistic scholarship, one feature of which was his critique of the epic form in the 'old' tradition and rejection of the poems of Homer. Instead, he urged poets to "drive their wagons on untrodden fields."⁴⁷² In poetry, he was concerned with elegiac narrative and preferred the polished refinement of shorter poetic forms. He was a great librarian and cataloguer of culture, law, history and poetry and lived in a great metropolis at the centre of a cultural and economic empire.

There is certainly some resonance between elements of the historical character and Pound's own position and moral perspective. Pound saw the poet as an integral part of society even if the conditions of modernity continued to prove otherwise. Pound was dedicated to the individual artist and his freedom to be true to his art and that alone should dictate his output, not the machinery of publishing. In Section V he wrote of the ideal genius working free from cultural compromise, "each man where he can, wearing out the day in his manner." (V, l.59) Pound had dedicated a good part of the decade to the refinement of poetic form that captures 'the image', that attempts to draw the finer pigments of perception with precision and accuracy. It is of great importance then that Pound begins his 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' June 19, 1919 with this image of the poet walking in the grove and working in the tradition of a classical ivory tower poet-critic like Callimachus.

In translating not just words but meaning, the poet must find new ways to make clear the 'illuminating detail' of each complex of images in the poem,

⁴⁷² Alan Cameron, *Callimachus and his Critics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)

especially if it cannot be expected that every word of reference will be fully understood by a contemporary reader. The sense was, by necessity, to be conveyed in the image or tone of each verse, and not dependent on the comprehension of every reference. As he was to later write with regards to the Cantos, “skip anything you don’t understand and go on till you pick it up again. All tosh about *foreign languages* making it difficult. The quotes are all either explained at once by repeat or they are definitely *of* the things indicated.”⁴⁷³ This line has relevance beyond being simply commentary on The Cantos as it could apply equally to Pound’s prose style and his use of esoteric references.

The central critiques that, in the context of *The New Age* writings, relate to Pound’s ‘The Seafarer’ and “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” and are revisited in ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ are varied but inter-related. In ‘Homage’ we find the themes of death and the continued life of the artist’s work. There is also the Propertian theme of ‘love’ that Pound makes his very own by using it to both comment on his past lyric pursuits as well as his ideological belief in the importance of dedication to one’s art in the face of public idiocy. The over-arching theme that has great bearing on Pound *after* Propertius, and indeed, after London, is the value placed on the individual spirit in the face of demands of the public (publishing, nation, patron) and censorship, the central fear at the time of the poem’s conception in the wake of Pound’s Lustra, the suppression of *The Little Review*, and the challenges in publishing Joyce’s Ulysses. The major change in Pound that we read in the ‘Homage’ is that this individual faces the realization that he cannot remain ‘The Seafarer’ turning his back on “this dead life / on loan and on land”, on “all arrogance of earthen riches,” and ignoring the world and involving himself solely in his private aesthetic pursuits. With his very existence threatened by not writing the patriotic

⁴⁷³ Ezra Pound to Sarah Perkins Cope (January 15, 1934) The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 250-251

epics of Horace or Virgil (contemporaries of Propertius), it is insufficient to continue to define the “cult of beauty” if the world is too blind to see it. Rather, he must account for the “cult of ugliness” to expose it. Rather than turning his back, the artist must engage, must BLAST society, asserting the proper role of the artist not just to ornament lyrics with “resonance, resonance and sonority... like a goose” (XII, l.65)

As the poem is based on an historical figure, a translation of an ancient voice, the text cannot sentimentalise the past but rather celebrates an atemporal element of literature where ‘all ages are contemporaneous’ and the insights of genius of a bygone era relevant in any age. In “The Approach to Paris II”(Sept. 11, 1913) Pound wrote, “the great periods of English have been the periods when the poets showed the greatest powers of assimilation.” He saw the great arts incorporating past genius and “leaning somewhat” on each other “to treat poetry as an art.”⁴⁷⁴ We read this assimilation simultaneously in Pound’s occupation of Propertius’ perspective and in the ghost imagery that Pound offers us in his version of the elegies. The supernatural element emphasizes the permanent presence of poets and intellects with shades and ghosts all “one tangle of shadows”(VI, l.4)

Death is then a central theme in the poem, and Sullivan tells us that that final end was greatly feared by Propertius, though much less by Pound who saw it as his day of reckoning and willing participation in a rebirth (‘La Fraisine’). The idea that for his dedication to the arts he would be recognized too late is a powerful and present theme in ‘Homage’: “But I also among the later nephews of this city / shall have my dog’s day/ With no stone upon my contemptible sepulchre”(I, ll.28-29). The material commemoration is of little consequence and ultimately impermanent compared with creation from the mind of genius:

⁴⁷⁴ “Even in the less glorious eras we see Browning and Swinburne leaning somewhat upon Hugo. Swinburne is impartially eclectic, and he was almost the first writer since Herrick’s time to treat poetry as an art.” Ezra Pound, “Approach to Paris” *The New Age* (September 11, 1913) 577b

Happy who are mentioned in my pamphlets
 the songs shall be a fine tomb-stone over their beauty.
 But against this?
 Neither expensive pyramids scraping the stars in their route,
 Nor houses modeled upon that of Jove in East Elis,
 Nor the monumental effigies of Mausolus,
 Are a complete elucidation of death.
 Flame burns, rain sinks into the cracks
 And they all go rack ruin beneath the thud of the years.

 Stands genius a deathless adornment,
 a name not to be worn out with the years.

(I, ll.51-59)

While a tone of defeat can be read in the tone of these lines, the final lines lift some small comfort in eternal recognition in an empire fixed on war, where dedication to poetry is insignificant unless it serves the purposes of state or market. We find this dedication to the art in Propertius' dedication to Cynthia. Although by his ordering of his versions of Propertius Pound stressed aspects of the elegist *other* than his love poetry, Pound placed them at the centre of his series of six that appeared in *The New Age*.

The patriotic writers, those who serve to glorify the nation (rather than the object of his love or of the muses "eager to instruct me in a new gamut"⁴⁷⁵) are not models to be emulated. But Pound and Propertius do state, perhaps ironically, that they would be willing to address "Roman reputations." The poets imply that they cannot fully take up their roles until their art is respected wholly: "And I also will sing war when this matter of a girl is exhausted[...] And I shall follow the camp, I shall be duly celebrated."(V, 9,21-22)⁴⁷⁶ Poetry that serves the public interest is of no merit to Pound and with Propertius he shares ambivalence for poetry that praises the distensions of Empire rather than focusing on the inspiration of "a young Muse with young loves:"

⁴⁷⁵ Ezra Pound "Homage to Sextus Propertius V" *The New Age* XXV.15 (August 14, 1919) 264

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

lasting genius after his death can motivate him, not the “chiefs in the Roman camp”, but “In the meantime my songs will travel:”(I, l.38) Hooley writes, “*Ingenium*, not love, is Propertius’s most enduring claim to our attention, and Pound would be right if he had merely pointed that out. He is miraculously right in recreating it.”⁴⁸⁵

The relationship of this dedication to his love, to whom his “songs shall be a fine tomb-stone over their beauty”(I, l.64) is ultimately complicated by the mode of production and dissemination. In part 2 of section V, Pound’s Propertius addresses his patron, “you ask on what account I write so many love-lyrics,” explaining that the dealing with his lyrics is dealing with “no more than a girl,” their beauty simple, “we look at the process”, “There are new jobs for the author,” and we shall spin long yarns out of nothing.” These new jobs in worlds Poundian and Propertian, where the public does not have the machinery to recognise beauty, must be undertaken as the only alternative is death, the exile’s land of no return. So after 1917, when “Homage to Sextus Propertius” was being composed, Pound launched into prose attacks on tyranny and public stupidity in “Provincialism the Enemy”, turning away from the private poem and facing the concerns of the public.

Donald Davie has insisted that ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ is ‘translatorese’, full of mistranslations, a deliberate model of how *not* to translate. He insists that Pound intentionally planted some of the more awkward and humorous wordings as a part of his idea that the poem could be used as a critique of Imperialism:

For all the manifold ironies of Homage to Sextus Propertius are directed ultimately at the reader, who is convicted, line by line, of having only pompously imperial, Babu English, into which to render a poem that derides and deflates imperial pretensions. Thus it appears that by wholly transposing ‘imperialism’ into language, into the texture of style, by forgetting his own existence ‘for the sake of the lines,’ Pound has effected a far more wounding

⁴⁸⁵ Daniel M. Hooley, The Classics in Paraphrase: Ezra Pound and Modern Translators of Latin Poetry (London: Associated University Presses, 1988) 53

and penetrating critique of imperialism in general than he could have done by fabricating consciously a schematic correspondence between himself and Propertius, the British Empire and the Roman.⁴⁸⁶

Although Davie makes a strong argument, it remains difficult to know whether Pound intended such a critique of imperialism, was just exercising his poetic ear through a predecessor of English poetry, or both. Years earlier, Pound had written in *The New Age* about the importance of poetry as an art, not a vehicle for ideology, “not as a vehicle for the distribution of philosophy.” In “The Approach to Paris” Pound praises Lionel Johnson for “those few poems of his where he seems to be moved by emotion rather than by the critical spirit.” Pound wrote that a work of art should influence other art by a “new keenness of the ear, or a new flair for working, or a deeper desire for common sense if the work is what is properly called classic.” The inspiration will take hold because a notable work of art “may be drawn into oneself, its master may beget a peculiar hunger for new sorts of mastery and perfection.” This is much more than the “counterfeiting of its superficial qualities.”⁴⁸⁷

Yet we have witnessed him imitate the alliterative verse of ‘The Seafarer’ while projecting an undeniably political thrust to the themes of the poem not only by his choices of words, but by the timing of publication, the venue where the poem first appeared, and his emotional association with the protagonist. And it is attention to the ‘classic’ elements of creation, not philosophy or ideology that will inspire “new sorts of mastery and perfection” so the poems must be “provocative, by which I mean that they may stimulate his old habits of perception, or they may even bring into being new modes of perception” while the poet can continue “in his task of making new and original structures.”⁴⁸⁸ With the act of creation, the focus of inspiration, rather than critique or promotion of ideology, the moral arguments of the

⁴⁸⁶ Donald Davie, *Ezra Pound* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976) 61

⁴⁸⁷ Ezra Pound, “The Approach to Paris II” *The New Age* XIII.20 (September 11, 1913) 577b

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 578a

translation are expressed by Propertius through Pound. But while it has been argued that “Pound’s failure was his indifference to making clear the logic of relation between Propertius’s voice and his own,”⁴⁸⁹ his success is making the concerns of a Alexandrian poet relevant for the modern intellectual and the age in which he lives.

His selection of ‘The Seafarer’ and ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ as translations to be featured in *The New Age* were not exercises in technique like his translations of Arnaut Daniel in “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” or his re-workings of Li-Po in *The New Age* and *Cathay* had been. These translations were concerned with *what* was being said at least as much as *how* it was being said. The major turn comes in the pages of *The New Age* and permeates his prose while the themes of his prose become the heart of his poetic content. His translations relate the old worlds to the new and in the lines of these poems are embodied the central poetic shift in Pound’s London years: a move from infusing the social with the poetic (“I Gather the Limbs of Osiris”, “Patria Mia”, “Approach to Paris”) to making the poetic political (*Cathay*, ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’, ‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley’ and eventually, the *Cantos*).

For a poet so emphatically critical of the public, the masses, he certainly goes to great lengths to imply an audience in his prose and poetry. As we have seen, his prose relies on an implied audience by often stepping back and explaining what he was doing as if it were a conversation. His poetry adopts personae whose very situation places them against a listening or reading public. Or, in the case of both translations we have looked at, the personae have demanded to express how they differ from us or their countrymen or peers.

Part of the challenge with the translation and incorporation of personae is that the audience must recognize the historical relevance of the mask for the work to

⁴⁸⁹ Daniel M. Hooley, *The Classics in Paraphrase: Ezra Pound and Modern Translators of Latin Poetry* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988) 33-4

have meaning. It is of great help to know of Cino and de Born's struggles against corruption before reading Pound's translations. In the personae of troubadours Pound tried to recreate the spirit of the original poems but in the translations Pound associated himself with the original poet as Pound later claimed he had with Propertius. (Letters 231) Pound applies Propertius' emotions to the world of 1919, the poem is read with this understanding by necessity.

Eight years earlier he had asked in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" in *The New Age*, "What interest have all men in common? What forces play upon them all?" Pound was by necessity addressing the interests of "all men", concerned with the social challenges of art and the increasing political constraints upon individuality "habituating men to consider themselves as bits of mechanism for one use or another." (SP, 195) With the idea that "man is the slave of the state", "a piece of the machine"⁴⁹⁰ the Risorgimento would remain a dream and the arts would remain peripheral. For Pound, the arts, like science, were integral to society as we are:

one humanity, compounded of one mud and of one aether; and every man who does his own job really well has a latent respect for every other man who does *his* own job really well. This is our lasting bond [...] the man who really does the thing well, if he be pleased afterwards to talk about it, gets always his auditors' attention; he gets his audience the moment he says something so intimate that it proves him the expert; he does not, as a rule, sling generalities; he gives he particular case for what it is worth; the truth is the individual.⁴⁹¹

'Homage to Sextus Propertius' shows a poet who has a certain degree of resignation and has isolated himself as 'The Seafarer' had, but he shows signs of willingness to address more than the object of his love-lyrics. After Propertius, in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' and The Cantos, the tone is more desperate, direct, despairing and disgusted. Pound's use of personae in the case of both 'The Seafarer'

⁴⁹⁰ Ezra Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy I" *The New Age* XXI.11 (July 12, 1917) 245a

⁴⁹¹ Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris IX: On Technique" *The New Age* X.13 (January 25, 1912) 298a

and 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' provided him with a more satisfactory explication of what his prose, as he so often recognized himself, fell short of expressing. As J.P. Sullivan writes, "Pound often realized that what he wanted to express could *only* be expressed in that particular way."⁴⁹² When Pound wrote in Poetry, 1917, "Things to be Done," he stated, "we must try to think, at least a little, about civilization"⁴⁹³ as when a "civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects."⁴⁹⁴ In 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' Pound addressed both social and literary concerns simultaneously, a problem he had identified in the time of *Ripostes* but had just begun to resolve in poetry. 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' shows the first major step towards a total vision in Pound's poetry that would include history, economics, humour and criticism.

For just under two decades Pound had been artistically involved with the religion of beauty from Dante to Provence to the Pre-Raphaelites to Yeats, an aesthetic commitment that fostered an increased rejection of materialism, incorporating shades of genius and past personae. This aesthetic idea in the environment of *Orage* and *The New Age* allowed his masks to move beyond his poetry playing a part where they may in social and artistic pieces. From the intellectual awakening of "Patria Mia"(1912) to the "terror of poverty" and "constant exchange of conversation" of "Pastiche: The Regional"(1919), Pound's aesthetic voices had a prose persona and they were mutually supportive. In *The New Age* his poetry and prose were political from the outset as *The New Age* was "a free forum where every man is allowed to speak his mind"⁴⁹⁵ and with "Patria Mia" appearing

⁴⁹² J.P. Sullivan, *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964) 24

⁴⁹³ Ezra Pound in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988) 284

⁴⁹⁴ Ezra Pound, "The Renaissance" (October, 1914) in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. T.S. Eliot, ed. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London: 1954) 225

⁴⁹⁵ Ezra Pound, "The Black Crusade" (Letter to the Editor) *The New Age* XII.3 (November 21, 1912) 69

next to an article called “The Folly of Anti-Semitism” or ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ publication coinciding with C.H. Douglas’ Economic Democracy, the context provided a political relevance.

‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ shows us a poet who, after 10 years of creative and economic struggle is stifled by his own poetry and its apparent failure in convincing the public via the rotten and tasteless periodical publications. Pound had passionately put his voice in the small journals of America and Britain but cultural intelligence must not have heard; the masses were too stupid to understand or the economic mechanism of publication was “a sham.” Pound’s growing dissatisfaction was matched by his continued uphill climb, his lonely plight to exemplify what was best for art in his own verse and to publish the genius works of others against suppression, censorship, and indifference. “Masaryk”(1920) speaks of the necessity of strong individuals in strategic positions, “our immediate hopes depend upon the state of the sense of justice in the better minds of our time.”⁴⁹⁶ In “What America Has to Live Down” Pound saw Henry James as one of these minds, an unheard exile like Pound himself:

Henry James worked himself to death trying to explain Europe to America and America to Europe. I don’t say it couldn’t have been done in a style more comprehensible to the average American: no one tried it. America mistook this titanic work for the mere elaboration of a too fussy temperament. Henry James’ mention of the German pervasiveness in the ‘eighties passed without notice.⁴⁹⁷

This is Pound identifying with the struggles of a great American writer, a man who shared Pound’s own dedication to promoting the best in art and cultural dialogue, an expatriate celebrated by Pound for “his propaganda, his continuing labour for

⁴⁹⁶ Ezra Pound, “Masaryk” *The New Age* XXVI.22 (April 1, 1920) 350b

⁴⁹⁷ Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down” *The New Age* XXIII.20 (September 12, 1918) 314a

individual freedom, his recurrent assaults upon cruelties and oppressions.”⁴⁹⁸ He writes:

His last act was the great gesture of protest. He had been writing protests steadily from August 1914 until the time of his change of allegiance.

No one in America attached any significance to this act, which will, however, take rank in history.⁴⁹⁹

Despite the lack of public acknowledgement of James’ intellectual leadership on issues of international relevance, he will be remembered. Like the poet of Propertius, he will be “a name not to be worn out with the years.”⁵⁰⁰ Whatever the accuracy of Pound’s evaluation of James, he certainly identifies his own efforts in the metropolitan axis between Europe and America in London as in the same vein of James as exile intellectuals confronting the “infinite and ineffable imbecility” of “an old bitch gone in the teeth.” (‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley’ V, l.3) But Pound made his own protests, the ‘Homage’ his most significant poetic protest in *The New Age*. Sullivan writes:

Pound’s state of mind in a milieu which hysterically sentimentalized one of the most idiotic and tragic of human affairs, and which look to Kipling for a new tyrtaeus, is more clearly seen in *Mauberley* (in this sense at least *Mauberley* is a popularization of the *Homage*). It was, however, the Roman poet who became earlier the mask through which Pound registered his protest at what he thought was the monstrous state of society and culture in which he found himself living.⁵⁰¹

The exiled American writer spoke to his audience through his character, the Roman poet Propertius.

The exile poet critic was the ‘antenna of the race’, facilitating the conversation between nations and cultures past and present. Pound was incredibly frustrated that society continued not to recognise this platitude:

⁴⁹⁸ Ezra Pound, “Patria Mia VIII” *The New Age* XI.26 (October 24, 1912), 611b.

⁴⁹⁹ Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down” *The New Age* XXIII.20 (September 12, 1918) 314a

⁵⁰⁰ Ezra Pound, “Homage to Sextus Propertius” *The New Age* XXV.8 (June 19, 1919) 133

⁵⁰¹ J.P. Sullivan, *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964) 26-7

The Pariah, the expatriate, might have seemed the natural interpreter between the two nations.[...] English and French and Americans may be willing to make certain exchanges, will be tolerant of periodicals which report the mental activities of people outside their own borders.⁵⁰²

That was 1918. By 1919, the exile was convinced that he needed a new centre from which to continue his commitment to art as he no longer saw “the point in ramming art against the dead mentality of England.”⁵⁰³ Pound had spent six years boldly writing and revising his poetry, delving into all eras and continents, editing his collections and refining his ideas from the “luminous detail” to the image to the vortex and *logopoeia*. Perhaps, now that with ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’ and ‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley’ Pound had somewhat emerged from behind his masks, “and now that there is no longer any intellectual *life* in England save what centres in this eight by ten pentagonal room” he could finally start again with a clearer conception of his technique, method, and themes and what would be a life-long task that was, after a false start, finally gaining momentum:

And now that there is no longer any intellectual *life* in England save what centres in this eight by ten pentagonal room; now that Rémy and Henry are gone and Yeats faded, and NO literary publication whatever extant in England, save what ‘we’ print (*Egoist* and Ovid Press), the question remains whether I have to give up every shed of comfort, every scrap of my personal life, and ‘gravitate’ to a New York which wants me as little now as it did ten and fifteen years ago. Whether, from the medical point of view it is masochism for me even to stay here, instead of shifting to Paris. Whether self-inflicted torture ever has the slightest element of dignity in it?

Or whether I am Omar.

Have I a country at all...?

(Letter to William Carlos Williams, September 11, 1920)⁵⁰⁴

In December of 1945, the courts of the District of Columbia heard the doctors’ diagnosis of insanity in a case of treason. Ezra Pound, poet, economist,

⁵⁰² Ezra Pound, “What America Has to Live Down” *The New Age* XXIII.20 (September 12, 1918) 314a-b

⁵⁰³ Ezra Pound to John Quinn *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound to John Quinn 1915-1924* Timothy Materer, ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991) 194

⁵⁰⁴ Ezra Pound to William Carlos Williams *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* D.D. Paige, ed. (Faber and Faber: London, 1950) 158-159

social commentator, and propagandist, was about to enter a twelve-year stay as a patient at St. Elizabeths (sic) for treason against the United States of America.

Although never entering the realm of the popular, Ezra Pound's poetry became eclipsed by his actions during the war, his radical politics and offensive cultural views. A revival in Pound's work in poetry began in 1947, largely promoted by James Laughlin's publishing company, *New Directions*. With a characteristic boldness, Laughlin kept Pound's poetic work in the public sphere. Laughlin had taken chances on anyone he considered an original, based on quality and the assumption that the given works would not sell in the marketplace. Often one author led him to another. At the recommendation of Pound, he took on William Carlos Williams and Henry Miller. Williams brought him to Nathanael West and Miller encouraged him to reprint Herman Hesse's "Siddharta,". T.S. Eliot recommended Djuna Barnes. Laughlin took many risks with what he published, but the case of an American traitor was especially daring. It was quite a risk for a publisher to embrace a treasonous American at this time. As a result, Pound's work was introduced to a much wider audience than ever before. This made Pound's case, his life, and his work a current event to more people than he had been able to reach on his own at his height over thirty years earlier. Pound became a powerful figure to young writers and thinkers of the postwar period causing a forceful rift in approaches to Pound, politics, and to the modernist canon.

Without a conviction, Pound was committed to St. Elizabeths, a psychiatric institution, to avoid a potentially lengthy trial and embarrassing political process. Poets from all over the world pleaded for his release, and in 1948, *The Pisan Cantos* received the prestigious Bollingen Award. This award opened a bitter controversy that has continued for decades. The critical heritage has been extensive creating what has been called "The Pound Industry".

Hugh Kenner dared to defend Pound's post-war reputation as a poet with his The Poetry of Ezra Pound in 1951 but it was the publication in 1954 of The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound edited by T.S. Eliot that really started the post-war redemption of Pound's tarnished reputation.

Eliot's exclusion of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", Pound's first contribution to *The New Age*, can perhaps be explained by the circumstances into which the publishing of such a collection would be released. The critical climate was one that, if not convinced of discarding Pound completely, certainly had a watchful eye out for the subtle ideological undercurrents of his prose and poetry. As a result, Eliot was obligated to select pieces from Pound's extensive prose offerings that presented as clearly as possible and left no ambiguities for the facilitation of fascist or anti-Semitic readings. For this reason, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris", a series of twelve articles of which five were taken up by translations of ten Arnaut Daniel canzoni, five translations of Cavalcanti, and the translation of 'The Seafarer', can too easily be read as disjointed notes adhering too strongly to Pound's active demands of reader involvement and interpolation for the critical climate of the post-trial Pound era. Eliot writes:

Mr. Pound has never valued his literary criticism except in terms of its immediate impact; the editor, on the other hand, wish to regard the material in historical perspective, to put a new generation of readers, into whose hands the earlier collections and scattered essays did not come when they were new, into a position to appreciate the central importance of Pound's critical writing in the development of poetry during the first half of the twentieth century.⁵⁰⁵

So Eliot began the collection with "A Retrospect"(1918), a clear and well-articulated piece consisting of various prose pronouncements Pound had made earlier in the decade. If the hope was to reinstate Pound as a central figure in the development of poetry, starting the collection with the loose and impressionistic "I

⁵⁰⁵ T.S. Eliot, ed. Literary Essays of Ezra Pound (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) x

Gather the Limbs of Osiris” a piece from *The New Age*, where C.H. Douglas had expounded on his economic theory with clear anti-Semitic undercurrents, would not have been prudent in 1954. Neither would it have been wise to include other early prose from *The New Age*, sections of “Patria Mia” or “Through Alien Eyes” that address “the large buttocks of the Jew” or so casually explain the “Jewish system of training as the wise means devised by one section of the poor, one nation of our country, to gain advantage over the rest. Which they very obviously do.”⁵⁰⁶

Pound’s relationship to *The New Age* has been examined by exploring the personal and political themes of exile and economics in Chapters One, Two, Three, and Four. In the last two chapters of this dissertation, Chapter Five and Chapter Six, his literary relationship with the journal has been explored, examining two of his most criticized “translations” and their meanings in *The New Age* context, ‘The Seafarer’ and ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’. The fact that Pound addresses economic and social issues regarding America and the world that are not exclusively or transparently ‘literary’ does not mean these works have no bearing on his literary position or do not take the form of literary commentary. Instead, Pound reconstitutes these peripheral concerns as investigations into the institutions that constitute literature as a field of cultural production. In *The New Age* prose and poetry can be read a trajectory in Pound’s thought and actions that, through the attempts to rectify the tension between his early aesthetic “worship of beauty” and the *Risorgimento* or reform of culture, set Pound on a path of dissatisfaction that lead him into the lines of ‘Hugh Selwyn Mauberley’ and out of the London that had once been his “Rome of the decadence.”⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁶ Ezra Pound “Through Alien Eyes II” *The New Age* XII.12 (January 23, 1913) 276a-b

⁵⁰⁷ Ezra Pound, “Through Alien Eyes III” *The New Age* XII.13 (January 30, 1913) 300b

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

The New Age Enforcing Pound's Exile

"The only chance for victory over the brainwash is the right of every man to have his ideas judged one at a time."

Ezra Pound, 1962⁵⁰⁸

Faced with the above quotation by Ezra Pound, made in his later years when he "lost the ability to reach the core of my thought with words"⁵⁰⁹ and chose silence, the reader of this dissertation, indeed, the author of the dissertation, might ask, 'which ideas should I judge first?'

Pound, the expatriate American, first wrote a letter to editor of *The New Age* in April, 1910, a year and a half after arriving in London. He was 24 years old. Pound's first letter to the editor of *The New Age* is terse, bold, aloof, and characteristically confident. When Pound wrote:

In the last NEW AGE I read that 'Geniuses should not be any more ashamed of their warts than of their heads.' Accordingly, I lay my hand upon my wart and agree that warts are trumps⁵¹⁰

he displayed himself in his full, cocky charm, warts and all. Pound's proclamation has been stated; he shall sit on his perch, as he informed those first readers, flaunting his special status, the exile, the exalted, the genius. In one short letter the Pound caricature that remains applicable through the decade is born, one of a distant, arrogant, self-proclaimed genius with an endearing sense of humour.

⁵⁰⁸ Ezra Pound, "The Art of Poetry 5" Donald Hall, *The Paris Review* (Iss. 28, Summer/Fall 1962) <www.theparisreview.org/media/2163_HALL.pdf>

⁵⁰⁹ Richard Sieburth, "Chronology" *Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations*. (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003) 1232-3

⁵¹⁰ Ezra Pound, "A Correction," Letters to the Editor. *The New Age* VI.26 (April 28, 1910)

This dissertation has focused on the wealth of information contained in the published pages of Pound in *The New Age* and, as a result, was able to identify the recurring theme of exile in Pound's critical, economic and literary positions. Pound the expatriate came to *The New Age* with seeds of isolation planted from his youth in America and *The New Age* became his flowerbed. Genius met his facilitating medium.

Chapter One of this dissertation identified the importance of such a study. There was a time when *The New Age* factored faintly on the radars of Pound scholars who, in examining Pound the poet, found in his contributions to *The Little Review*, *Poetry*, and *The Egoist* ample illumination of his early poetic development. More recently, while *The New Age* had warranted the consideration of critics who addressed Pound's later life, particularly his radical economics, fascism, anti-Semitism, or *The Cantos*, Pound's relationship to *The New Age* has not received the attention of a full-length study. This dissertation has attempted to begin to fill that gap.

Chapter Two of this study analysed Pound's psychological roots, his personal history, his family, his education, and discussed the many ways the disenchanted writer had been made to feel an exile in his homeland, even before he landed in Europe. By reading his perspectives "through alien eyes" on America and then Britain, his critical stance is established in terms of this exile or alienation. This feeling remained throughout his early years in London and once Pound joined *The New Age* his role as literary figure expanded enormously. It was shown that his sense of alienation or exile played a large part in Pound's positioning as critic in *The New Age* and afforded him an objectivity with which he could attempt to implement a Risorgimento.

Chapters Three and Four examined the more concrete underpinnings of Pound's state of exile as expressed in *The New Age*, that is, the socio-economic themes of isolation in his contributions to the journal. By addressing the protests against intellectual oppression and cultural commodification that appear in Pound's writings, his case against conformity is accounted for in *The New Age*. Angered by the demands capitalism makes on art, Pound undertakes appeals for public support of the individual, patronage for the artist to maintain the individuality, and for poetry and publishing to facilitate communication and exchange between nations. Pound is read as arguing that with economic security provided by patrons, the artist is liberated from public demands on art and can therefore maintain independence, objectivity, and accurate self-expression. If communication can be 'accurate', by which this dissertation understands Pound as saying 'uninfluenced by the demands of the marketplace' or the ignorance of provincialism, then the Risorgimento will come. All of these ideas, it is argued, begin as a part of Pound's aesthetic or artistic argument for a renaissance. However, through the decade of involvement with *The New Age* and the impact of World War I, his ideas on art become integrated with his developing economic vision. It is shown that Pound found his concerns reinforced by the economic theory of C.H. Douglas in *The New Age* in 1919 and the starting point for social reform shifted from a literary rebirth to an economic revolution.

Chapters Five and Six, the last two chapters of this dissertation, explore Pound's literary relationship to *The New Age* and further incorporate the themes of exile and isolation, now in reference to specific works of poetry. By arguing that *The New Age* provided a unique harbour of creativity for Pound, these chapters further explore the compatibility and fusion of literary and political themes in Pound's cultural critique. Considering two translations at either end of the decade, 'The Seafarer'(1911) and 'Homage to Sextus Propertius'(1919), Pound's vision,

developed in *The New Age*, that incorporated the role of the isolated poet as a member of a healthy society, is presented in the themes he chose to illuminate in his timely translations. While self-exile in pursuit of one's craft is argued to be central to 'The Seafarer', the ultimate isolation, death, is presented as the poet's final, and everlasting word in 'Homage to Sextus Propertius.'

It is necessary to focus on the character of *The New Age* as much as on that of the author in a study such as this. For the purposes of this study, the journal became an equal partner in understanding Pound. Pound had made a notable impact in a short period of time after arriving in London, and for any young author, but especially Pound, securing a paid position at a well-connected, and well-read journal would have been considered a significant accomplishment. His role at *The New Age* quickly evolved into that of literary critic and social commentator, these new positions in addition to his remaining a poet.

Being paid for his work for *The New Age* was not the norm, but *The New Age* was never short on contributors. As Wallace Martin has written:

The writers of the first two decades of the century, like the writers of every other period, tried to obtain the best possible price for their work; however, when they wanted to express opinions that were not marketable, or when they wanted to speak to the special audience thus afforded them, they wrote for *The New Age*.⁵¹¹

In fact, Pound even points out that the expression of certain opinions that *The New Age* would publish could keep a writer from earning an income in other journals when he writes:

THE NEW AGE sets a most commendable example to certain other periodicals which not only demand that all writers in their columns shall turn themselves into a weak puling copy of the editorial board, but even try to damage one's income if one ventures to express contrary beliefs in the columns of other papers.⁵¹²

⁵¹¹ Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 3

⁵¹² Ezra Pound, "Affirmations II: Vorticism" *The New Age* XVI.II (January 14, 1915) 277a

A.R. Orage, editor of *The New Age*, was an unusual editor, not only recruiting talent but also permitting his contributors to write whatever they wished and seeing to it that the pieces would be published exactly as submitted. He recruited and supported Pound in all of his endeavors even when they disagreed on issues. For ten years, Orage tolerated Pound's "Indiscretions", his controversial translations, his love/hate relationship with his homeland and his country of refuge because he respected Pound as a poet. Orage wrote:

Mr. Pound [...] always likes to hitch his wagon to a star. He has always a ton of precept for a pound of example and in America, more than in any other country save Germany, it appears to be required of a man that there shall be 'significance', intention, aim, theory—anything you like expressive of direction—in everything he does...

It must be admitted, however, that this habit of Mr Pound has its good as well as its somewhat absurd side... No poet, I think, dare claim to be a pupil of Mr. Pound who cannot prove that he has been to school to poetry and submitted himself to a craft—apprenticeship; and no poet will long command Mr Pound's approval who is not always learning and experimenting. Now this, which I call the good side in Mr Pound's doctrine, is disliked in England, where it has for years been the habit of critics to pretend that poetry grows on bushes or in parsley-beds. That poetry should be the practice of 'a learned, self-conscious craft' to be carried on by a 'guild of adepts' appears to Mr Archer, for example, to be a heresy of the first order. How much of the best poetry, he exclaims, has been written with 'little technical study behind it'; and how little necessary, therefore, any previous learning is...

It will be seen, of course, how the confusion in Mr Archer's mind has arisen. Because it is a fact that the 'best' poetry *looks* effortless, he has fallen into the spectator's error of concluding that it *is* effortless. And because, again, a considerable part of the work of the 'learned, self-conscious craftsman' is pedantic and artificial, he has been confirmed in his error. The truth of the matter, however, is with Mr Pound. Dangerous as it may be to require that a poet shall be learned in his profession, it is much more dangerous to deprecate his learning.⁵¹³

This respect for Pound as a craftsman, as a poet by training and trade, is made clear in this excerpt. In Orage, Pound had a support without which his years in London would no doubt have been very different.

⁵¹³ A.R. Orage in Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 255-6

However, this brings our attention to an important question and an underlying problem that permeates the chapters of this dissertation. Such complicated implications are a part of studying such a complicated and controversial character as Ezra Pound.

Every student in every English Literature department at every university must encounter Ezra Pound in spite of what any given educator may feel towards the poet. And at once, the student comes face to face with an implicit political and intellectual debate brewing beneath every decision to teach or not to teach Ezra Pound. And then once decided, the question is “how?”

Engaging with Pound the historical figure is an exercise in deciphering what exactly is at stake in reading Pound the poet and critic. He is a relentlessly polarizing figure and although the most important post-war Pound critic, Hugh Kenner, encouraged us to see literary modernism as “The Pound Era”, embracing Pound has remained difficult for readers, and even for a great deal of the rich critical heritage since Kenner.

Critics have seen Pound’s “descent from political conservatism and fashionable aesthetic revolution into raging antiliberalism, antidemocracy, and anti-semitism” as “a path many of his contemporaries in Europe traversed or at least entered upon.”⁵¹⁴ Surette sees Pound as part of the long post-nineteenth century movement to fascism and for Pound, this move, or at least his participation in its economic, political, and racial discourses, has permanently marred his reputation as a progressive poet, art theorist, and thinker. In *T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism and Literary Form*, Anthony Julius worked with the Eliot case not simply to make clear Eliot’s anti-Semitism, but to expose the ways in which readers, critics, and Eliot himself managed to dismiss such facts and to maintain the accepted value in the poet’s texts. For Eliot as much as

⁵¹⁴ Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 19

Pound, the distinctly modern poetic theories of aesthetic objectivity insulated these artists and their works from critical or popular dismissal based on racism or misogyny, etc. Robert Casillo examines Pound in the light of his fascism and anti-Semitism in The Genealogy of Demons. Anti-Semitism, Fascism, and the Myths of Ezra Pound. His study approaches Pound with a psychoanalytic hermeneutics that contextualizes pieces of Pound's body of work, letters, poetry and prose, within his life as a whole, often suggesting a consistent line of thought that may or may not be present at all.

It is the opinion of the writer of this dissertation that these studies, while being of great benefit to the understanding of Pound and great contributions to the art and politics debate, need a wider historical context to appreciate fully the significance of any statement or piece of art, as Pound himself urges us, and as quoted at the outset of this chapter, to judge a man "one idea at a time." Therefore, while Robert Casillo, for example, may use very effective techniques to gain understanding of the fascism and anti-Semitism that may be read in some of Pound's writing, his efforts are ultimately limited unless they can take into account the wider contexts of Pound's explicated ideas, of *Poundism*, the mind of the man, the psychology of a fragmented genius. And perhaps, Pound is a poet who is enriched by a reading informed by the behavioural sciences.

The study of the works in *The New Age* with which this dissertation has been concerned introduce ideas that, it has been argued, can be seen as foundations of Pound's radical and reprehensible views and opinions of his later years. If *The New Age* had a role to play in the trajectory Pound was on upon leaving London, that of his route to total exile and treason, one question that this dissertation offers for further study is, "Did the absence of set editorial policy at *The New Age* allow the potentially deranged mind to go off the track?" We hypothesise, "So what if F.S.

Flint had not ceded his seat as literary critic for *The New Age* in 1911 and Pound had not landed at *The New Age*?”

Such inquiries would require a multi-disciplinary approach, but the questions do demand a reconsideration of the possible causes of Pound’s descent into radicalism and vocal pronouncements of hate, if any answers can be reached. It is not as though Pound was the only writer encouraged to speak his mind at *The New Age*. Writers were keen to contribute, even “without payment. There were several reasons for this,” writes Martin:

Socialists wanted to do what they could to forward their cause; some admired the magazine and its audience, considering it the ideal medium for the publication of their works; and still others contributed because of their admiration of Orage. Perhaps the most important factor, suggests S.G. Hobson, was that writers were free to express their convictions in *The New Age*; they were willing to forgo payment in return for intellectual freedom.⁵¹⁵

But Pound never had to forgo that payment. He was one of the only contributors to receive a regular wage for his contributions. Perhaps he was even encouraged by that fact to contribute *more* thus growing to fill the space that the unique environment of *The New Age* provided him. So, to see Orage as playing an important part in Pound’s development as critic and thinker opens up a complicated possibility that *The New Age* played an active part in nurturing evil genius.

“I would part Mr. Pound from his theories as often as I found him clinging to one, for they will in the end be his ruin.”

-A.R. Orage⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁵ Wallace Martin, *‘The New Age’ Under Orage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967)

37

⁵¹⁶ A.R. Orage, *The New Age* XVII (August 5, 1915) 332

Works Cited

- Ardis, Ann L. Modernism and Cultural Conflict 1980-1922. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Bell, Ian F.A. Critic as Scientist: The Modernist Poetics of Ezra Pound. London: Methuen and Co., 1981.
- Bell, Ian F.A., ed. Ezra Pound: Tactics for Reading. London: Vision Press, 1982.
- Bloom, Harold, ed. Ezra Pound. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987.
- Cameron, Alan. Callimachus and his Critics. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Carpenter, Humphrey. A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound. London: Faber and Faber, 1988.
- Casillo, Robert. The Genealogy of Demons. Anti-Semitism, Fascism, and the Myths of Ezra Pound. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.
- Cianci, Giovanni, ed. Wyndham Lewis: Letteratura/Pittura. Palermo: Sellerio 1982
- Chace, William M. The Political Identities of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973.
- Cookson, William, ed. Ezra Pound: Selected Prose 1909-1965 London: Faber and Faber, 1973.
- Coyle, Michael. Ezra Pound, Popular Genres, and the Discourse of Culture. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.
- Davidson, James Dale. "Ezra Pound, RIP" *The Libertarian Forum* IV.10 (December, 1972. Ludwig von Mises Institute. 28 September 2007.
<<http://www.mises.org/journals/libertarianforum.asp>>
- Davie, Donald. Ezra Pound. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.
- Davie, Donald. Ezra Pound: Poet as Sculptor. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,

1965.

De Nagy, N. Christoph. Ezra Pound's Poetics and Literary Tradition: The Critical Decade. Francke Verlag: Bern, 1966.

Desai, Meghnad. The Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2006.

Douglas, C.H. Economic Democracy. London: Cecil Palmer, 1921.

Edwards, Paul, ed. BLAST: Vorticism 1914-1918 Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2000.

Eliot, T.S. Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry. London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1917.

Eliot, T.S., ed. Literary Essays of Ezra Pound. London: Faber and Faber, 1954.

Emery, Clark. Ideas Into Action: A Study of Pound's Cantos. Washington: McGregor & Werner, Inc., 1958.

Gallup, Donald. Ezra Pound. A Bibliography. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1983.

Garver, Lee. "Seafarer Socialism: Pound, The New Age, and Anglo-Medieval Radicalism" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29.4 (Summer 2006) Project Muse John Hopkins University Press. 1 September 2006.
<<http://muse.jhu.edu>>

Gordon, Ida, ed. The Seafarer. University of Exeter Press: Exeter, 1979.

Gordon, R.K. ed. Anglo-Saxon Poetry. J.M. Dent and Sons: London, 1926.

Gross, John, ed. The Modern Movement. London: Harper Collins, 1992.

Thomas F. Grieve, Ezra Pound's Early Poetry and Poetics. London: University of Missouri Press, 1997.

Hall, Donald. "The Art of Poetry 5" *The Paris Review* (Iss. 28, Summer/Fall 1962) 3 December 2008. <www.theparisreview.org/media/2163_HALL.pdf>

Heymann, C. David. Ezra Pound: The Last Rower. New York: The Viking Press,

1976.

Hooley, Daniel M. The Classics in Paraphrase: Ezra Pound and Modern Translators of Latin Poetry. London: Associated University Presses, 1988.

Jackson, Thomas H. The Early Poetry of Ezra Pound. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Keegan, John. The First World War. London: Pimlico, 1999.

Kenner, Hugh. The Poetry of Ezra Pound. London: Faber and Faber, 1951.

Kenner, Hugh. The Pound Era. London: Faber and Faber, 1971.

King, Michael John, ed. Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound. London: Faber and # Faber, 1976.

Lentricchia, Frank. Modernist Quartet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Litz, A. Walton, Lewis Menand and Lawrence Rainey, eds. The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Vol. VII. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Martin, Wallace. 'The New Age' Under Orage. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967.

Mitchell, Bruce and Fred C. Robinson, eds. A Guide to Old English 5th Ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Mitchell, Bruce. Old English & Anglo-Saxon England. Blackwell: Oxford, 1995.

Moody, A. David. Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and His Work, Volume I. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Morrison, Paul. The Poetics of Fascism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Paul de Man. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Nadel, Ira, ed. The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

“The New Age.” The Modernist Journals Project. 1995. Brown University and The University of Tulsa. 1 February 2004-30 March 2008.

<<http://mordjournal.org>>

Nicholls, Peter. Ezra Pound: Politics, Economics and Writing. London: The MacMillan Press, 1984.

Norman, Charles Ezra Pound New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960.

Olsen, Alexandra H. and Burton Raffel, eds. Poems and Prose from the Old English. London, Yale University Press, 1998.

Ormsby, Eric. “The Voice Impersonator” New Criterion (March 1, 2004)

Paige, D.D. Selected Letters of Ezra Pound 1907-1941. Faber and Faber Ltd., London: 1950.

Perloff, Marjorie. The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture. London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986.

“Poetry.” The Modernist Journals Project. 1995. Brown University and The University of Tulsa. 1 February 2004-30 March 2008.

<<http://mordjournal.org>>

Pound, Ezra. The Cantos of Ezra Pound. New York: New Directions, 1973.

Pound, Ezra. Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir. New York: New Directions, 1970.

Pound, Ezra. Impact: Essays on Ignorance and the Decline of American Civilization Noel Stock, ed. New York: New Directions, 1973.

Pound, Ezra. Selected Poems of Ezra Pound. New York, New Directions: 1956.

Pound, Ezra. “Small Magazines.” The English Journal Vol XIX, no. 9 (November 1930). The Modernist Journals Project. 1995. Brown University and The University of Tulsa. 1 April 2007

<http://dl.lib.brown.edu:8081/exist/mjp/mjp_essays.xq>

- Pound, Ezra. "Psychology and Troubadours" The Spirit of Romance. London: Peter Owen Limited, 1910, rev. 1952.
- Pound, Omar and Robert Spoo, ed. Ezra Pound and Margaret Cravens: A Tragic Friendship, 1910-1912. London: Duke University Press, 1988.
- Pratt, William, ed. Ezra Pound: Nature and Myth. AMS Press: New York, 2002.
- Propertius, Sextus. The Poems/ Propertius. Guy Lee, trans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Rainey, Lawrence. "The Creation of the Avant-Garde: F.T. Marinetti and Ezra Pound" *Modernism/Modernity* 1.3 (1994) 195-220.
- Read, Forrest, ed. Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce. New York: New Directions, 1970.
- Redman, Tim. Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Robinson, Fred C. "The Might of the North: Pound's Anglo-Saxon Studies and 'The Seafarer'" *The Yale Review* 71 (1981-82) 199-224.
- Rothenberg, Jerome and Pierre Joris, eds. Poems for the Millenium. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Ruthven, K.K. A Guide to Ezra Pound's Personae. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- Schneidau, Herbert N. Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969.
- Schuchard, Ronald. Eliot's Dark Angel: Intersections of Life and Art. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Sieburth, Richard, ed. Ezra Pound: Poems and Translations. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 2003.
- Sieburth, Richard. "In Pound We Trust: The Economy of Poetry/The Poetry of

- Economics.” *Critical Inquiry* XIV.1 (Autumn, 1987)
- Stock, Noel. Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964.
- Stock, Noel. The Life of Ezra Pound. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1970.
- Sullivan, J.P. Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius. London: Faber and Faber, 1964.
- Surette, Leon. A Light from Eleusis: A Study of Ezra Pound’s *Cantos*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Surette, Leon. Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999.
- Surette, Leon. The Birth of Modernism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats and the Occult. Montreal: McGill-Queens Press, 1993.
- Symons, Julian. Makers of the New: The Revolution in Literature, 1912-1939. Worcester, Baylis and Son, 1987.
- Taylor, Richard and Claus Melchior, eds. Ezra Pound and Europe. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993.
- Thomas, Ron. The Latin Masks of Ezra Pound. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1977.
- Torrey, E. Fuller. The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secret’s of St. Elizabeth’s. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1984.
- Tytell, John. Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1987.
- Wilhelm, J.J. Ezra Pound in London and Paris:1908-1925 London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.
- Witemeyer, Hugh. The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908-1920. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- Wolfe, Cary. The Limits of American Literary Ideology in Pound and Emerson.

New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Xie, Ming. Ezra Pound and the Appropriation of Chinese Poetry. New York:
Garland Publishing, 1999.